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JANUARY 1993

VIDEO

magazine



NEW 3-CHIP CAMCORDER

THE YEAR'S BEST

Editors' Choice: ViVA Gold Awards

SNEAK PREVIEW '93

Wider, Sharper,
Brighter New Year

DESKTOP VIDEO

A Macintosh
Editing Primer

VIDEOGRAPHY ON SKIS

Cold Weather
Shooter's Guide

VIDEOTESTS

Multistandard VCR,
8MM TV/VCR,
32-Inch TV



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Canon

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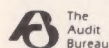
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VIVA Gold! awards for
the year's best prod-
ucts, tapes and discs.
Photograph by
Vittorio Sartor

Video Magazine
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Number 10



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VIDEO ADVERTISER Q&A

Gary Bettan of Electronic Mailbox talks about consumer edit control.

Q What's the biggest trend in consumer video editing today?

A Sony Control L (LANC) and its widespread use. New Sony and Canon 8mm and Hi8 camcorders utilize the Control L communication bus between the camcorder and editor, which allows you to control all functions of both devices accurately, and in the most basic realtime form.

Q From a practical standpoint, what does this mean to the consumer?

A If you ever tried to edit without edit control, one thing you run out of quickly is hands. You don't have enough hands and fingers to operate all the equipment. Edit control makes the editing process incredibly more streamlined, accurate and simpler to do.

Q What current editors utilize Control L?

A From Videonics, the Editmaker and the Thumbs Up; from Sony, the RME line of editors; the Future Video line of editors is now Control L compatible; and the whole myriad of desktop video is Control L- oriented.

Q Will we see more Control L equipment in the year ahead?

A I hope we see Panasonic, JVC and Hitachi all introducing some form of consumer edit control so that the geniuses in Silicon Valley can figure out a way that it can talk to Control L products. The consumer is buying their video equipment one piece at a time, and the manufacturers should help them build upon what they already have as they become experienced and more sophisticated users. Either way, there are products today that offer Control L and this is a major buying feature that consumers should look for.

CHANNEL ONE

Back to the future

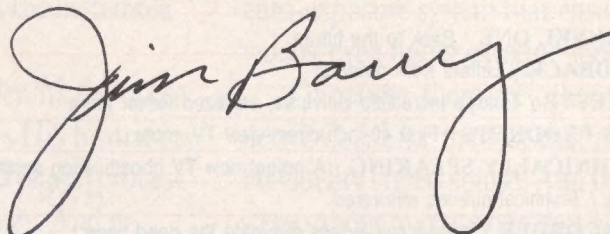
It's our custom to take a look back at the just-concluded year each January by selecting for ViVA Gold! awards the best and most innovative new equipment and programs introduced that year. You'll find this year's roster of honorees beginning on page 40, and we think you'll agree it reflects the product-development commitment of companies that are pushing the outer edges of the video technology envelope.

But January is also a time to look ahead, a time for resolutions and new commitments. In this vein, we're also presenting this month, in "Sneak Preview '93," a look ahead at some of the new products and innovations we expect to be available for your enjoyment later this year.

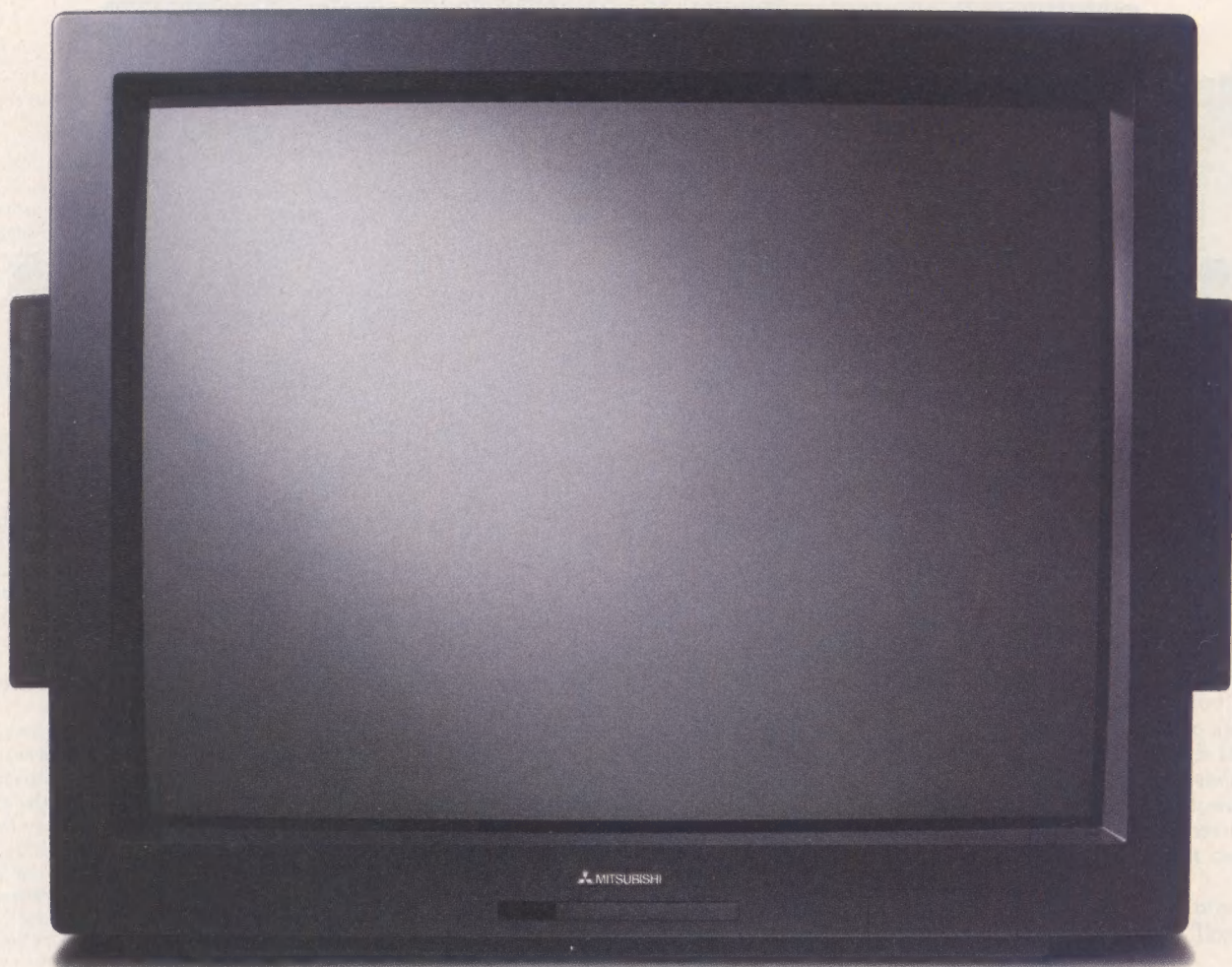
The inauguration of a new president, a man elected on a promise to be an agent of positive change, brings more than the usual sense of anticipation to the political scene this new year. You'll find a preview of how the Clinton administration may address issues important to home video enthusiasts in this month's "Off the Air."

Change will certainly be in the air as digital technology plays an increasing role in new products that will provide better picture quality, increased interactivity and more choices for the viewer. New wide-screen 16:9 TV sets will begin to arrive in stores this spring, foreshadowing the coming of HDTV, for which the Federal Communications Commission is scheduled to designate a standard before the year is out. And digital advances will continue to close the gap separating computers and video, advancing the cause of desktop video for editing purposes and interactive programming for education and entertainment.

Change is as constant in video as it is in politics, and in the '90s the speed with which events bring change presents the greatest challenge for us all as we try to make informed decisions. In the video realm, our new year's resolution is to continue to do our best to keep you, our readers, ahead of the technology curve and enjoying the latest in new video equipment and programs.



James M. Barry
Editor



Can you spot the Mitsubishi 35" TV in this ad?
(Hint: it's the one sitting behind our new 40")

It's 31% bigger than a 35", 119% bigger than a 27" and 1000% bigger than we could show you in this ad. It's the new Mitsubishi 40", the largest tube television you can buy. Once you've seen it, it's kind of hard to see anything else.

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Managing Editor, Stan Pinkwas

Technical Editor, Lancelot Braithwaite

Senior Editors, Kenneth Korman,
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Corporate Offices, Editorial & Sales: 460
West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001;
212-947-6500, 212-947-6727 (fax)

West Coast Sales Office: Cynthia Gallivan,
West Coast Advertising Manager; 1453
Third Street, Suite 490, Santa Monica, CA
90401; 310-393-5057, 310-393-5538 (fax)

Chicago Sales Office: Milton Gerber, Media
Plus, 4409 RFD Stonehaven Drive, Long
Grove, IL 60047; 708-913-5400,
708-913-5403 (fax); 405 North Wabash,
Chicago, IL 60611; 312-644-0001,
312-644-0930 (fax)

Detroit Sales Office: John Kennedy &
Associates, 16899 Village Lane, Grosse
Pointe, MI 48230; 313-886-4399,
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Editor-in-Chief, Art Levis (1936-1991)

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FEEDBACK

Dreamy dual deck

Your report from CES ("Your Show of Shows," Aug. '92) noted that 8mm/VHS dual-well decks are planned for 1993 by Samsung and Go-Video. As a long-term Betaphile I prefer to record in the superior format, but I also need VHS for rental tapes. I've long dreamed of a dual-well Beta/VHS VCR. Sony owes such a deck to its forgotten Beta owners. But if Sony won't do it, maybe Samsung or Go-Video will.

Harold Rice
Baltimore, Maryland

No sound advice

After calling some of the mail-order sources listed in "Video's Best Kept Secret" (Oct. '92), I found they could not tell me what kind of soundtrack (mono, hi-fi stereo, hi-fi stereo surround, etc.) these videotapes had. There should be some kind of reference for this type of information.

David J. Pryor
Sauquoit, New York

Editor's reply: Unfortunately, there is no reference source for video soundtracks, and the information provided by software suppliers on their own products is sketchy at best. We have long supported the idea of a standardized chart on each tape and disc detailing all significant audio and video data, but progress has been very slow. Look to our "Tapes & Discs" section for the best information we can get on each month's major new releases.

Home theater of the absurd

Your glowing recommendation of the JVC HR-S6800 in "A League of Their Own" (Oct. '92) is a complete reversal from the "Videotest" in the September issue. I own a 6800 and find it inferior to my 5800, both in features and functions. It is a good machine for someone with other JVC units, only because it responds to the older remotes for things like manual index mark and remote eject. The lack of a dedicated rear S-VHS input is absurd.

Merlin David
Suffern, New York



Compact Contender: Yashica's Hi8 KX-H3 combines good features and high performance.

Ready, willing and stable

In the search for the best compact Hi8 camcorder, your report on the Yashica KX-H3 (equivalent to the Sony TR101) led me to evaluate its optical stabilization system. Disappointed by earlier stabilization methods, I was impressed by how well this one works. No loss of picture quality and, even at full 10x zoom, a pretty stable picture. Good low-light performance too. I recently used it aboard a high-performance glider and found surprisingly solid results with the grass-field takeoff and aerobatic maneuvers. The compact size is what allowed me to carry it in the glider. This has to be a strong contender for the best current "get everything" camcorder.

Michael D. Zuteck
Kemah, Texas

Super neglected

I was disappointed to see that your feature on video by mail ("Video's Best Kept Secret," Oct. '92) did not include Super Source Video as virtually the only source of S-VHS movies. It's bad enough that the selection of S-VHS movies is so small. You make matters worse by omitting the only resource we S-VHS owners have.

Richard Caplan
Brookline, Massachusetts

Editor's reply: The phone number for Super Source Video is 800-331-6304. Super Source is a subsidiary of Twin Creeks Entertainment.

Video Magazine welcomes your comments. Address correspondence to Feedback, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

GAZETTE

That's Incredible!

The opening of another electronics superstore is usually as exciting as the prospect of another *Police Academy* sequel. But shoppers in Arlington, Texas, and Portland, Oregon, were enthusiastic enough about the recent launch of Tandy's two new Incredible Universe electronics stores to jam highways for miles around, and to wait as long as 2-1/2 hours to get in.

To find out why people are so excited about the Incredible Universe, we traveled to the new Arlington store, which sits about halfway between Dallas and Fort Worth. After hearing about the store's 220,000-square-foot floor, we expected to find a warehouse full of discounted VCRs and TVs. But instead, we found what videophiles have long awaited—a painless, fun way to shop.

In a facility the size of three football fields, the Incredible Universe stocks and displays virtually any electronic product you might want. The video department showcases 315 different TV sets, 72 VCRs and 78 camcorders.



Sign 'Em Up: Customers line up for membership cards at the opening of Arlington's Incredible Universe.

That's virtually every major-brand video product available in the U.S., all up and running so you can easily compare them. It also has complete audio, computer, appliance, camera, personal electronics, car audio, audio and video software, and karaoke departments.

You can also run head-to-head tests of surround-sound gear in four comfort-

able home theater demo rooms. And the Incredible Universe checks local advertised prices every day to make sure each product sells at the lowest price in town.

Shoppers can kick the tires all they want without fear of confronting an overaggressive salesperson. In fact, the store's staff aren't considered salespeople—they're referred to as "cast members." They're not on commission, and they can't accept spiffs, the bonuses manufacturers pay salespeople to push a certain product. In fact, the cast members don't seem to care what you buy, as long as you're happy.

Upon entering the Incredible Universe for the first time, each shopper is issued a membership card. To make a purchase, you present your card to a cast member, who reads its barcode with a light pen attached to a GRiD pen-activated handheld computer. The cast member then reads the barcode on the product price tag, and the GRiD computer transmits instructions via radio to the store's main computer.

The computer tells the warehouse staff what to pull and where to find it, and a complex conveyor system routes your purchases to the checkout counter. According to Tandy, the process takes at most 90 seconds. But there's probably no need to rush—with a Pizza Hut restaurant, a Mrs. Field's cookie booth and complete child-care facilities in the store, you can shop as long as you want without worrying about creature comforts.

Whether or not these high-tech systems will offset the high cost of keeping such a huge store staffed on slow Tuesday afternoons is anyone's guess. But for electronics buffs tired of high-pressure salespeople, deceptive advertising and poor selection, the Incredible Universe stands as an unqualified success.

—Brent Butterworth



Maid to Order: "Cast member" uses a handheld pen-activated computer to transmit purchase information.

Sanitized for your protection

Video software companies often assemble "unrated" versions of R-rated theatrical releases, incorporating all the steamy footage that was cut to avoid the

FOR THE DISCRIMINATING MOVIE FAN.

The Addams Family	*1000900
Hamlet (1990)	*0970608
The Sound Of Music	*0003905
Backdraft	*0559005
Alien	0000208
Aliens	0360909
The Abyss	*0881102
Die Hard	*0367607
Die Hard 2	*0041806
Ghost	*0826008
E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial	*0681106
The Silence Of The Lambs	0805309
Batman (1989)	*0642504
The Godfather	0000802
The Godfather: Part III	0842302
Back To The Future	*0211409
Back To The Future Part II	*0921304
Back To The Future Part III	*0497008
Predator	*0364901
Predator 2	*0104307
Robin Hood: Prince Of Thieves	*0976803
Home Alone	*0104208
Scarface (1983)	0216804
Goodfellas	*0969808
The Blues Brothers	0211706
Dune	0211102
Kindergarten Cop	0523407
Lethal Weapon	0630806
Lethal Weapon 2	*0642702
National Lampoon's Animal House	0211508
The Man Who Would Be King	*0085803
The Hunt For Red October	*0825000
The Bible	*0074708
Jaws	0100008
Edward Scissorhands	0104604
The African Queen	0051102
Beetlejuice	0633008
American Graffiti	0211300
Blue Velvet	*0515007
Hard To Kill	0953505
The Prince Of Tides	*0847103
Wayne's World	*0853705



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Buggy*
0853408



Star Trek VI:
The Undiscovered Country*
1001007



Dances with Wolves*
0805200



Return of the Jedi*
0354704



Star Wars*
0056408



The Empire Strikes Back*
0091009

The Commitments	0691303
Forbidden Planet	*0844407

Fried Green Tomatoes	1005404
North By Northwest	*0844209

Hearts Of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse	1002500
Harry Connick, Jr.: Singin' & Swingin'	0968107
Star Trek: The Motion Picture	*0203505
Star Trek II: The Wrath Of Khan	*0201301
Star Trek III: The Search For Spock	*0201608
Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home	*0430603
Star Trek V: The Final Frontier	*0448605
Superman: The Movie	*0001305
Superman II	0601500
Born On The Fourth Of July	*0489104
Field Of Dreams	0920306
Presumed Innocent	*0962100
Road Warrior	0602805
Chinatown	*0202507
Bird On A Wire	*0497305
Beverly Hills Cop	0205302
Beverly Hills Cop II	0431908
Henry V (1990)	*0040303
Henry & June	*0499301
The Grifters	0383000
Bugs Bunny Classics	0297705
Conan The Barbarian	*0220509
The Empire Of The Sun	*0633206
Dangerous Liaisons	*0638700
Reversal Of Fortune	0969709
Always	*0921502
Dirty Harry	0601708
Memphis Belle	*0983502
Big	0367409
New Jack City	0971507
Fatal Attraction	0439307
Charlots Of Fire	0601401
All Dogs Go To Heaven	0289702
It's A Wonderful Life (45th Anniversary Ed.)	0392308
The Last Boy Scout	*0779108
The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell Of Fear	*0842609
Patton	0788703
2001: A Space Odyssey	*0844308
The Wizard Of Oz	0001404

Here's a great way to build a collection of your favorite movies—on laserdiscs! Just write in the numbers of the 3 laserdiscs you want for \$1.00 each, plus shipping and handling. In exchange, you simply agree to buy two more laserdiscs in the next year, at regular Club prices (currently as low as \$29.95, plus shipping and handling)—and you may cancel membership at any time after doing so.

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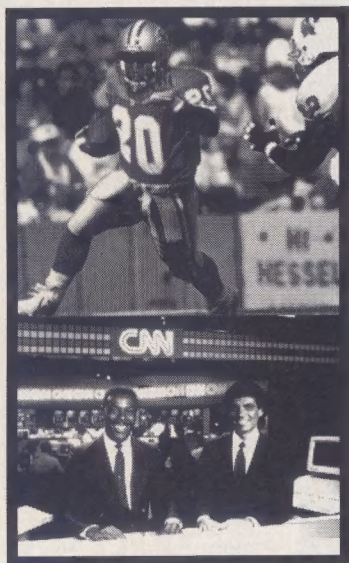
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audience-reducing NC-17 tag. But a startup company called PrimeCut Entertainment proposes just the opposite: It wants to release alternate versions that show less skin, not more.

Targeting audiences that are uncomfortable with R-rated movies, PrimeCut plans to bring those films down to a PG or PG-13 level by cutting out the sex, violence and salty language. Featuring the meat of the original films but less of the sizzle, these videos would resemble those familiar, cleaned-up movie "versions" shown on airplanes—except they wouldn't all star Jim Belushi. At press-time, the Mission Viejo, California-based company was hoping to release its first movies in February.

PrimeCut CEO John J. Lee Jr. expects a significant audience for his product. He says there are more than 21 million children in the U.S. between the ages of eight and 15 who want to rent movies like *Lethal Weapon 3* or *Terminator 2*, but who don't have their parents' permission. Another audience is parents who aren't renting adult-themed movies because they fear awkward moments when the whole family gathers around the TV.

Video stores are interested in carrying the PrimeCut product. Tom Foltz, director of movie management for West Coast Video Enterprises, franchiser of a 425-store chain, thinks PrimeCut movies will appeal to many 55-and-older renters—people who bring tapes back to the store and say, "It was a great movie, but the language was disgusting."

But PrimeCut faces a big hurdle in getting cooperation from studios and

filmmakers. "If the director is not willing to prepare a PrimeCut version, there won't be a PrimeCut version," Lee says. And judging from one studio's reaction to the idea, the company may face an uphill battle: "I think people want to see a movie that was made, not a movie that was censored," says George Feltenstein, senior vice president of MGM/UA Home Video. "If they want to see a movie that's censored, they can watch it on broadcast television." Feltenstein grants there might be a "minute percentage" of people for whom a PrimeCut version might be appropriate, but says it's not enough to make a business.

Another potential problem for PrimeCut is that some movies don't offer much beyond their R-rated scenes. "Certainly, I don't think you can clean up a *Basic Instinct*," says Foltz. "The movie might be *Basic*, but you can forget the *Instinct*." —George Mannes



One Size Fits All? Steve Martin's gift of a dream home doesn't impress his sweetheart in *Housesitter*.

Anatomy of a laugh

Steve Martin on how comedy works: "Everybody starts going, 'What if....' Finally you hit on it and go, 'Is that too stupid?' And the joy is saying, 'Let's do it.'"

In *Housesitter* (MCA/Universal), his latest attempt at "what if," Martin plays Newton Davis, a Boston architect who builds a dream house for his high school sweetheart, Becky (Dana Delany). She rejects him (and the white saltbox

continued on page 108

ILLUSTRATION: LUIS RAMOS JR.

The RCA 52" Projection Screen.

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VIDEOTESTS

Cutting the Curve:
The KV-32XBR95S employs Sony's new XBR² picture tube, which has a much flatter screen than standard Trinitron tubes and uses a darker coating to enhance contrast.



VIDEOTEST
665

SONY 32-inch TV set

The XBR² line represents Sony's first major change in top direct-view monitors since the PVM-2530 XBR Pro, which has been our reference standard since it was introduced a few years ago. At the heart of XBR² technology is a new Super Trinitron picture tube, which is vertically flat like other Trinitrons, but substantially less curved horizontally. A deep black screen coating provides richer color for today's higher resolution source material. There are, of course, improvements in video circuitry to bring out the best in the new tube.

The 32-inch KV-32XBR95S is one of three new models in the XBR² series. The \$1,899 KV-27XBR95S is a 27-inch model, and the \$2,599 KV-32XBR90S is a 32-inch model without a sound sys-

Sony KV-32XBR95S 32-Inch TV

Price: \$2,299

Weight & Size (h/w/d): 190.1 lbs. with speakers; 26-1/8 x 39-3/8 x 23-1/8 inches

Screen Size: 32 inches measured diagonally

Type of Tuning: frequency synthesis

Method of Tuning: programmable scan on set, scan plus direct access on remote

Broadcast Tuning Range: 2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable Tuning Range: 125 channels—A-8,

A-7, A-6, 2 to 13, A to W, W+1 to W+58, A-5 to A-1, W+59 to W+84

Remote Control: IR wireless with switch for TV/cable box and buttons for power, muting, sleep, TV/video, ant./aux., jump (last channel), 10-digit keypad, enter, display, PIP, PIP off, PIP channel + and -, code set, memo display, digital memo and menu; +/- rockers for volume and channel and a cursor/adjust rocker with enter when pressed; in covered compartment—slide switch for VTR 1/2/3/MDP, and buttons for learn, standard (reset), picture + and -, channel index 8 and 16, PIP, position, split, audio, swap, off, channel + and -, TV/video, replay; and device controllers for power, rewind/

HIGHLIGHTS

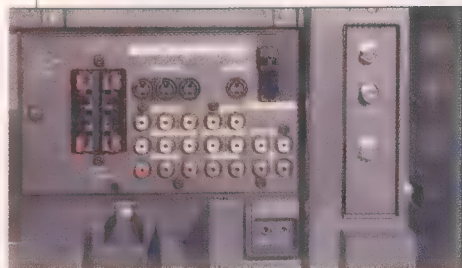
The KV-32XBR95S XBR² 32-inch TV set brings the reduced-curvature screen technology introduced in Panasonic's SuperFlat sets to Sony's popular Trinitron XBR line. In fact, the XBR² improves on standard Trinitrons in almost every way. The picture and sound are better, the menu system offers a staggering number of options, and the exterior is less techie-looking. We rate every aspect of this \$2,299 set excellent. It is our top choice in a large, direct-view monitor. Although it's expensive, the picture and sound are worth the difference.

search, play, fast forward/search, stop, pause, record (2), channel + and -, and TV/VTR

Inputs: rear—3 S-video/video/stereo audio, 2 F-connectors for VHF/

UHF/cable and auxiliary, mini jack for Control S in; front—video/stereo audio (duplicate of video 3 input on rear)

Outputs: S-video/video/stereo audio monitor, video/stereo audio loop-



Ins and Outs: The KV-32XBR95S has three rear S-video inputs and an S-video output of input 3.

tem, intended for custom installation or home theater use.

An entirely new DSP Axis Sound system complements the picture with Dolby Surround, Hughes SRS, and jazz club, dance club, live concert and simulated stereo surround modes. The set has internal amplifiers for front and rear channels, but none for a center channel or subwoofer as typically used in Dolby Pro-Logic systems. Sleek, good-sounding speakers that mount at the sides of the cabinet are supplied, but you must supply speakers for the rear channels.

A very flexible picture-in-picture
continued on page 107

through of input 3, fixed-level stereo audio, variable-level stereo audio, F-connector for RF output to cable box, mini jack for control out

External Speaker

Connectors: main—left and right, rear—left and right

Internal Audio

Amplifier Power: front—2 x 13 watts, rear—2 x 6.5 watts

Special Features: PIP, preset picture and sound modes, selectable color temperature, Dolby Surround, Hughes SRS, several surround modes, amps for rear speakers

Absent Features: headphone jack, second tuner for PIP

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: more than 700 lines

Picture S/N (dB): luminance—56.1, video—54.3, chroma AM—64.2, chroma PM—63.6

Accuracy of Colors: excellent

Audio Frequency Response: electronics—20 Hz-20 kHz, +0.3/-0.8 dB; speakers—50 Hz-16 kHz, -3 dB

Audio S/N: electronics—76.1 dB, speakers—72.2 dB

Total Harmonic Distortion: electronics—0.2%, speakers—0.6%

RATINGS

Picture: excellent

Audio: excellent

Ease of Use: excellent

Overall: excellent

VIDEOTEST
666

AIWA multi-standard VHS VCR

Because most foreign countries use a video standard different from the NTSC standard used in most of North America, foreign tapes usually won't play in VCRs sold here. This situation is particularly frustrating for those with friends, relatives and business associates overseas, because

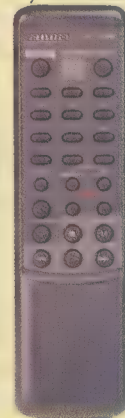
transferring a foreign tape to NTSC costs \$40 or more. Multistandard VCRs are available, but they start at \$700 and often require the use of a multistandard video monitor.

Aiwa has finally solved this problem with the MG360, a \$600 VCR that incorporates a digital standards converter. It records and plays in PAL, which is used in England, Germany and much of Europe, and NTSC 3.58, used in the U.S., Canada and Japan. It also records and plays tapes in two standards not used for broadcast—NTSC 4.43, which is commonly used for prerecorded videos in Europe, and MESECAM, a black-and-white version of France's SECAM standard that can be recorded from SECAM sources. It also plays SECAM tapes in black and white.

Almost all countries use one or more of these standards. However, Aiwa's manual cautions that the VCR cannot be used in Argentina, Brazil or Uruguay (which use exotic versions of PAL), so it is not a complete multistandard solu-

HIGHLIGHTS

It's expensive to have tapes transferred from foreign video standards to NTSC, and multistandard VCRs cost \$700 and up. With the \$600 MG360, Aiwa brings the price of multistandard video down to very affordable levels. The mono deck lets you play and record PAL, MESECAM, NTSC 3.58 and NTSC 4.43. It will play SECAM tapes in black and white, and tune in and record NTSC broadcasts. Picture is very good to excellent, audio is very good, ease of use is good to very good, and overall performance is very good.



tion, but it's close.

The tuner and RF (antenna/cable) output are compatible only with NTSC 3.58, so the MG360 can't be used to tune in foreign broadcasts. The big plus is that on playback, the standards converter produces a recordable video signal in NTSC 3.58 or PAL, so if you have a second VCR, you can convert virtually any tape to NTSC yourself (or to PAL, if you have a PAL VCR). Recordings made on the MG360 must be in the same standard as the original—the converter affects only the VCR output.

However, you pay a price for this capability. The MG360 lacks many features we take for granted even in bottom-of-the-line VCRs, like onscreen programming, LP and EP speeds, frame advance, slow motion and stereo hi-fi sound. It does offer digital auto tracking, digital still picture, a front-panel input and automatic noise canceling on still frames. Its worldwide power supply operates on AC from 110 to 240 volts at either 50 or 60 Hertz, but you may need an adapter for the wall outlet.



Standard Bearer: Aiwa's MG360 plays PAL, MESECAM, NTSC and NTSC 4.43 tapes.

If you think viewing a movie at home is a mere spectator sport, you've never strapped yourself into the Pioneer® Home Theater.

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care of the industry-leading Audio/Video Receivers by Pioneer.

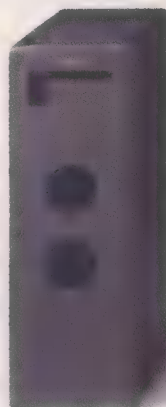
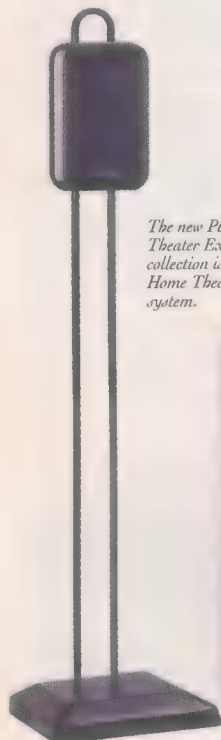
To maximize the quality of Surround Sound, we've assembled a superb new package of perfectly matched modular speakers specially designed to deliver a theater-like experience.

Of course, there's a lot more to tell, so call us at 1-800-PIONEER for more information. Or, drop by a Pioneer Home Theater dealer. You'll find just what you'd expect from the leaders in audio and video: Home Theater so advanced, you don't just watch it."



Our new ProVision SD-P5065K Projection TV incorporates a host of technological innovations. Pictured here is an actual on-screen image.

The new Pioneer S-V401K Home Theater Experience Speaker collection is customized for our Home Theater Surround Sound system.



PIONEER
The Art of Entertainment

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A quick timer allows automatic recording for up to four hours in 30-minute increments, and the programmable timer has six one-shot events and one weekly event. The timer may be used for line sources as well as for off-air recordings. It is capable of simulcast recording, and has a number of automatic operations like on/play and rewind/off/eject.

The MG360 looks like a conventional VCR, except for an exposed NTSC/thru/PAL switch to select the output standard for the digital converter, and indicators for PAL, MESECAM, NTSC 3.58, NTSC 4.43 and auto tracking. The thru mode outputs the standard recorded on the tape. Transport controls are also exposed on the front. Inside a compartment door (which can be removed) are the cassette hatch and buttons for eject, standard selection, channel, tracking, input select and other functions. The compartment also contains buttons for eject, standard selection, channel, tracking, input select and other functions. The compartment also contains buttons for programming which, thanks to the success of onscreen programming, we haven't seen in quite some time.

The rear panel resembles that of most other mono VCRs—RCA jacks for video/audio input and output, and buttons for standard selection, tracking and clock/counter functions. You can't program the VCR from the remote control.

Except for the two buttons that select the standard of the video output and the tape being played or recorded, the MG360 works like any other simple VCR without onscreen display. There are four buttons that let you set the tuner: preset, auto program, add/erase and TV/CATV. Three others operate the clock and counter, and there are five more for the clock, timer and one-touch record. Two do multiple duty for changing channels, setting clock and timer, and manual tracking adjustment.

Exposing the cassette hatch and eject button would be less decorative, but it would have enhanced operating ease. The remote duplicates many of the operating controls. Its keypad lets you select a channel directly, but there is no provision for presetting the tuner, setting the clock or programming the timer.

In NTSC position, the output is color or NTSC for NTSC and PAL tapes, and black-and-white NTSC 3.58 for MESECAM and SECAM tapes. In the PAL converter position, it plays any NTSC, PAL or MESECAM tape in color or PAL, and SECAM tapes in black-and-white PAL. Since there is no discernible penalty for using the digital converter, we recommend you leave it in

the appropriate position for the country you're in, unless you need to dub to another standard. Ease of use is only good to very good mainly because the MG360 lacks so many basic features.

VCR record/playback has a horizontal resolution of 230 lines for NTSC recordings and 240 lines for PAL recordings. The digital standards converter uses a seven-bit analog-to-digital converter.

Picture quality is very good to excellent. Audio quality is very good for linear track audio—it would be nice to have stereo hi-fi audio, but the differences between the way PAL/SECAM VCRs and NTSC VCRs handle hi-fi sound would have made such a feature very expensive. Overall, we rate the deck very good.

We expect the MG360's very good performance and breakthrough low price to make it a big hit among those who need multistandard capability. It performs at least as well as most other mono VHS decks and, although it lacks many common features, it does what it's supposed to do very well.

Aiwa MG360 Multistandard VHS VCR

Price: \$600

Weight & Size (h/w/d):
11-3/4 lbs.; 3-7/8 x 15
x 13 inches

Tape Format & Speed:
VHS SP

Video Heads: 2

Cue & Review Search:
5x, locking

**Fast Forward/Rewind
Time:** approx 4 min. for
T-120

Remote Control: IR
wireless with buttons
for power, system, 10-
digit keypad, TV/VCR,
channel set, clock/
counter, counter memo-
ry, counter reset,
channel/tracking - and
+, record (2), stop,
pause/still, rewind/
search, play and fast
forward/search

Audio: linear mono

Tuning Method:
frequency synthesis

Channel Selectors:
programmable scan on
VCR, scan plus direct
access on remote

Preset Method: auto
program with add/erase

Cable Tuning Range:
5A, 2 to 13, A to W,
W+1 to W+58, A-5 to
A-1, W+59 to W+84

Timer: 7-event/2-week

Special Features: still
frame, auto rewind,
counter memory

Absent Features: hi-fi
audio, frame advance,
slow motion, speed
play, audio dub, video
dub, insert edit, jog/
shuttle dial, remote
pause, titling, indexing

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:
NTSC—230 lines,
PAL—240 lines

S/N Ratios (dB): un-
weighted video—45.8
VCR, 59.3 converter;
weighted video—51.4
VCR, 60.4 converter;
chroma AM—46.8 VCR,
67.8 converter; chroma
PM—40.7 VCR, 50
converter

**Audio Frequency
Response:** 75 Hz-10
kHz (-3 dB)

Linear Audio S/N:
43.7 dB

Audio Distortion: 0.9%

RATINGS

Picture:
very good/excellent

Audio: very good

Ease of Use:
good/very good

Overall: very good

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VIDEOTESTS



Straight Shot: Marantz's first laserdisc player, the LV500, features a direct CD mode that deactivates the video circuitry for cleaner sound from compact discs.

VIDEOTEST
667

MARANTZ combi player

THX amplifier, indicate a renaissance of sorts for the company.

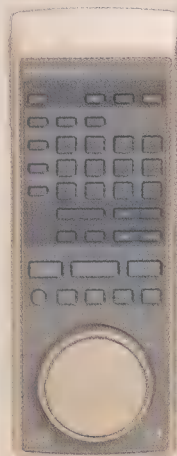
The LV500, Marantz's first laserdisc player, carries on this rich heritage with

Marantz is one of the most recognized names in audio, dating back to the early days of hi-fi. Its vintage tube amplifiers are perhaps the most cherished in the world—in Japan, they sell for about \$10,000—and its latest products, like the SM-80

a heavy emphasis on sound quality. It uses bitstream (one-bit) digital-to-analog conversion with two differential stages and a 20-bit, 8x oversampling digital filter for increased dynamic range. From a video standpoint, it's similar to Pioneer's CLD-D501, the machine on which the LV500 is based.

Like most other combi players, the LV500 accepts five- and three-inch CDs, and plays all LD, LV and CD-Video discs with access to both the analog and digital audio tracks. It plays both sides of laserdiscs automatically using an Alpha-Turn mechanism while maintaining the same orientation of the three-beam laser pickup with respect to the direction of disc travel.

Marantz LV500 Laserdisc Player



Price: \$799

Weight & Size (h/w/d): 19.9 lbs.; 5-3/8 x 17 x 17-1/4 inches

Disc Formats: LD—12 and 8-inch, CDV—5-inch, CD—5- and 3-inch

Direct Search: frame/time—less than 8 secs. same side

Cue & Review Search: 3x, 10x, 30x

Remote Pause: Marantz RC-5 compatible, full control

Jacks: 1 S-video output, 2 video outputs, 2 stereo audio outputs, one headphone output, one Toslink optical digital audio output, RCA jacks for remote control input and output

Remote Control: IR wireless with jog/shuttle dial and buttons for power, stop/eject, digital/analog/CX, audio L/R/stereo, A-B repeat, display, program, edit, chapter/time, 10-digit keypad, +10, clear, highlight/intro, pause, scan reverse, play, scan forward, skip reverse, skip forward, digital level control, side A, side B, plus rockers for still/step forward or reverse, multispeed forward and reverse, and multispeed— and +

Program Start Locator/Index/Cue: frame, time, chapter/track and points A-B

Analog Audio: hi-fi

AFM stereo/dual mono

Digital Audio: stereo/dual mono 1-bit dual-differential mode D/A converters with 20-bit 8x oversampling digital filter

CAV Effects: still frame, bidirectional frame advance, bidirectional slow motion 1/2x-1/90x, bidirectional speed play 2x-3x

Special Features: automatic side-changing, repeat playback, repeat play, auto program edit, 3-line digital Y/C separator, soft picture, last memory function, theater mode, shuttle dial, single-track play for karaoke, digital level

HIGHLIGHTS

Many audio companies offer laserdisc players, but few make their own. Usually, they modify existing designs, leaving the video works alone but adding their own audio circuitry. Marantz follows this trend with the \$799 LV500 combi player, which uses one-bit digital-to-analog converters in Marantz's unique dual-differential mode, along with a high-resolution 8x oversampling 20-bit digital filter. The LV500 offers automatic side-changing, but no digital effects. Picture and audio are excellent, ease of use is very good to excellent and overall performance is very good to excellent.

control, clear scan

Absent Features: digital CLV effects, RF input and output, jog dial

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution: 415 lines

S/N Ratios (dB): luminance—49.3 unweighted, 55.8 weighted; video—49.4 unweighted, 57.2 weighted; chroma AM—46.2, chroma PM—39.9

Audio Frequency Response: digital—10 Hz-20 kHz, +0/-0.5 dB; analog—20 Hz-20 kHz,

+2.4/-1.8 dB

Dynamic Range: 99 dB

Audio S/N: digital—rated 114 dB, measured 104 dB (our measurement limit); analog—67.1 dB

Audio Distortion: digital—0.002%, analog—0.03%

RATINGS

Picture: excellent

Audio: excellent

Ease of Use: very good/excellent

Overall: excellent

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On the inside, separate audio and video circuit boards with shielding between them minimize degrading interference between the signals. Unless you have one of today's best video monitors, using the LV500's S-video output will probably improve the picture—the output uses a high-performance, three-line digital comb filter for luminance/chrominance separation that is better than those found in most video monitors.

Its numerous operating modes include programming for up to 24 laserdisc chapters on both sides, A-B picture window with user-selected start and end points, and eight other repeat video playback options. With CDs and the audio portion of CD-Vs, you have seven options. Auto program editing juggles chapter/track playback to fit into user-designated time periods—this feature is useful when dubbing CDs onto audio cassettes. The last memory function stores the disc position and continues playback from a point just before it if you turn off the power in the middle of playback.

The LV500's unique champagne finish matches other Marantz components. The front panel holds most of the controls you need for playback, including a shuttle dial for forward and backward scan; buttons for play/pause, stop, open/close, chapter/track skip and other functions; and a quarter-inch headphone jack with level control.

The front panel also includes several unusual controls. A soft picture switch decreases picture sharpness and minimizes noise, which can make old movies and poorly mastered discs look a little better. A theater mode switch kills on-screen displays, provides a black screen in stop mode and during side changes, deactivates the front-panel display and slightly shortens side-changing time by not reading the table of contents on the second side of a laserdisc. A display button kills the player's display panel, leaving a single LED reminder, and a single play button pauses the player after a single chapter or track, which is convenient for karaoke. The direct CD button deactivates the video circuitry for cleaner sound, and only allows the disc tray to open far enough to load a CD, which speeds the loading process.

The rear panel offers an S-video output, two video outputs and two stereo audio outputs. There is no RF input or output, so if you have an older TV set with no video inputs, you'll have to daisy-chain the LV500 through a VCR or use a separate RF modulator. A Toslink optical digital output lets you connect the LV500 to a separate D/A converter, or to receivers or powered speakers that

continued on page 24



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The Baddest Of George Thorogood And The Destroyers (EMI) 84002

Temple Of The Dog (A&M) 31124

Clint Black: The Hard Way (RCA) 35458

Barcelona Gold (Warner Bros.) 63472

Carreras, Domingo, Pavarotti: 3 Tenors (London) 35078

Lindsey Buckingham: Out Of The Cradle (Reprise) 20483

Eagles: Greatest Hits 1971-1975 (Asylum) 23481

Natalie Cole: Unforgettable (Elektra) 83452

The Very Best Of The Righteous Brothers: Unchained Melody (Verve) 44658

John Mellencamp: Whenever We Wanted (Mercury) 74582

Robert Palmer: Addictions, Vol. 2 (Island) 25277

Michael Penn: Free-For-All (RCA) 20668

The Doors/Sdtrk. (Elektra) 54289

Mo' Money/Sdtrk. (A&M) 71593

Beastie Boys: Check Your Head (Capitol) 92473

Bela Fleck & The Flecktones: Ufo Tofu (Warner Bros.) 63589

Al B. Sure!: Sexy Versus (Warner Bros.) 24876

Joe Cocker: Night Calls (Capitol) 60071

Wynonna Judd: Wynonna (MCA/Curb) 64540

Hammer: Too Legit To Quit (Capitol) 25514

Wayne's World Soundtrack (Reprise) 63551

Tears For Fears: Tears Roll Down (The Hits 1982-1992) (Fontana) 80162

Amy Grant: Heart In Motion (A&M) 25182

Jimi Hendrix Experience: Live At Winterland (Rykodisc) 63650

Traffic: The Low Spark Of High Heeled Boys (Island) 25169

The Cars: Greatest Hits (Elektra) 53702

Peter Gabriel: So (Geffen) 14764

Bob James And Earl Klugh: Cool (Warner Bros.) 63299

Talking Heads: Stop Making Sense (Sire) 24560

Bell Blv DeVoe: Poison (MCA) 00547

Yanni: Dare To Dream (Private) 93703

Steppenwolf: 16 Greatest Hits (MCA) 13453

Miles Davis: Doo-Bop (Warner Bros.) 71151

James Taylor: Greatest Hits (Reprise) 23790

TLC: Oooooohhh... On The TLC Tip (LaFace) 50167

The Very Best Of The Boston Pops (Phillips) 15319

Megadeth: Countdown To Extinction (Capitol) 63340

Damn Yankees: Don't Tread (Warner Bros.) 53663

The Steve Miller Band: Greatest Hits 1974-1978 (Capitol) 33199

Tom Cochrane: Mad Mad World (Capitol) 11024

Eric Clapton: Rush-Music From The Motion Picture Soundtrack (Reprise) 05632

Bryan Adams: Waking Up The Neighbours (A&M) 35175

Rod Stewart: Downtown Train (Warner Bros.) 10708

k.d. lang: Ingénue (Warner Bros./Sire) 44370

Frank Sinatra: Sinatra Reprise/The Very Good Years (Reprise) 80304

Styx: Paradise Theatre (A&M) 25243

N.Y. Rock & Soul Revue (Giant) 63189

U2: Rattle And Hum (Island) 00596

Bon Jovi: New Jersey (Mercury) 00516

Squeeze: Singles 45's & Under (A&M) 35208

Prince & The N.P.G.: Diamonds And Pearls (WB/Paisley Park) 63372

Supertramp: Breakfast In America (A&M) 25246

Garth Brooks: Ropin' The Wind (Liberty) 25535

The Commitments/Sdtrk. (MCA) 74016

Extreme: Pornograffitti (A&M) 43557

Best Of The Grateful Dead/Skeletons From The Closet (Warner Bros.) 83892

Don Henley: The End Of The Innocence (Geffen) 01064

R.E.M.: Out Of Time (Warner Bros.) 24762

Eric B. & Rakim: Don't Sweat The Technique (MCA) 43930

Mr. Big: Lean Into It (Atlantic) 24821

Yes: Classic Yes (Atlantic) 50248

Jon Secada: Jon (SBK) 10742

The Cure: Wish (Elektra/Fiction) 11116

Starship: Greatest Hits (RCA) 90270

Jethro Tull: Thick As A Brick (Chrysalis) 01023

Fleetwood Mac (Reprise) 04897

Steely Dan: Gold (MCA) 74339

Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers: Into The Great Wide Open (MCA) 35409

Kronos Quartet: Pieces Of Africa (Nonesuch) 10472

Lethal Weapon 3/Sdtrk. (Reprise) 73322

Garry Mulligan: Re-birth Of The Cool (GRP) 64001

The Most Happy Fella/ New Broadway Cast (RCA Victor) 10463

Al Jarreau: Heaven & Earth (Reprise) 63697

XTC: Nonsuch (Geffen) 35406

Linda Ronstadt: Frenesi (Elektra) 24810

Randy Travis: Greatest Hits Vol. 1 (Warner Bros.) 21091

Randy Travis: Greatest Hits Vol. 2 (Warner Bros.) 11125

Robert Cray: I Was Warned (Mercury) 82335

Larry Carlton: Kid Gloves (GRP) 02487

Patty Smyth (MCA) 25090

The Best Of Jay & The Americans: Come A Little Bit Closer (EMI) 72262

Suzanne Vega: 99.9 F (A&M) 83406

Aerosmith: Pump (Geffen) 63678

Nirvana: Nevermind (Geffen) 15600

Dr. John: Goin' Back To New Orleans (Warner Bros.) 53246

Ringo Starr: Time Takes Time (Private Music) 35088

Battle: The Bach Album (DG) 73670

Anne Murray: Fifteen Of The Best (Liberty) 64657

Faith No More: Angel Dust (Reprise/Slash) 23736

GRP All-Star Big Band (GRP) 63298

Bob Marley: Legend (Island) 53521

Moody Blues: Greatest Hits (Threshold) 34284

Lyle Lovett: Joshua Judges Ruth (MCA/Curb) 10508

Elvis Presley: The Number One Hits (RCA) 72190

Paul Simon: Negotiations And Love Songs 1971-86 (Warner Bros.) 20461

Madonna: The Immaculate Collection (Sire) 54164

Peter Gabriel: Shaking The Tree-16 Golden Greats (Geffen) 11089

Soundgarden: Badmotorfinger (A&M) 05637

Nail Diamond: 12 Greatest Hits (MCA) 84050

A Tribe Called Quest: The Low End Theory (Jive) 24809

Sting: The Soul Cages (A&M) 25218

Van Halen: For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge (Warner Bros.) 10016

Bonnie Raitt: Luck Of The Draw (Capitol) 15567

David Bowie: Changesbowie (Rykodisc) 43693

Sinéad O'Connor: I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got (Chrysalis) 33512

Enya: Shepherd Moons (Reprise) 53190

Bonnie Raitt: Nick Of Time (Capitol) 54410

Daryl Hall & John Oates: Rock 'N Soul, Part 1 (RCA) 13313

Michael Crawford Performs Andrew Lloyd Webber (Atlantic) 74128

The Police: Every Breath You Take—The Singles (A&M) 73924

Horowitz The Poet (DG) 25258

Fleetwood Mac: Greatest Hits (Warner Bros.) 00796

Peter Dinklage: Classics (13 Greatest Hits) (A&M) 04894

Carpenters: Lovelines (A&M) 24763

The Who: Who's Better, Who's Best (MCA) 00790

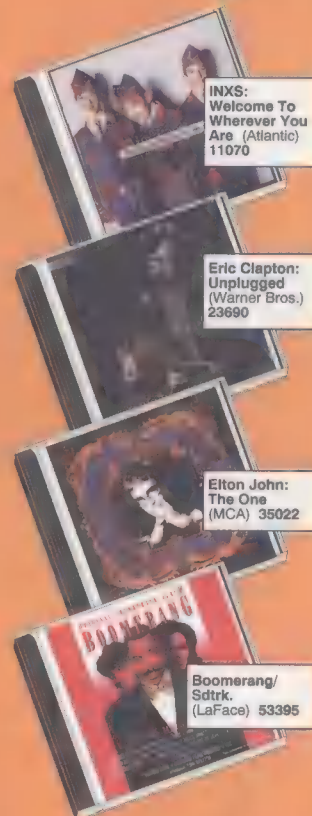
Mike Oldfield: Tubular Bells II (Reprise) 73515

Blues Brothers: Compilation (Atlantic) 43711

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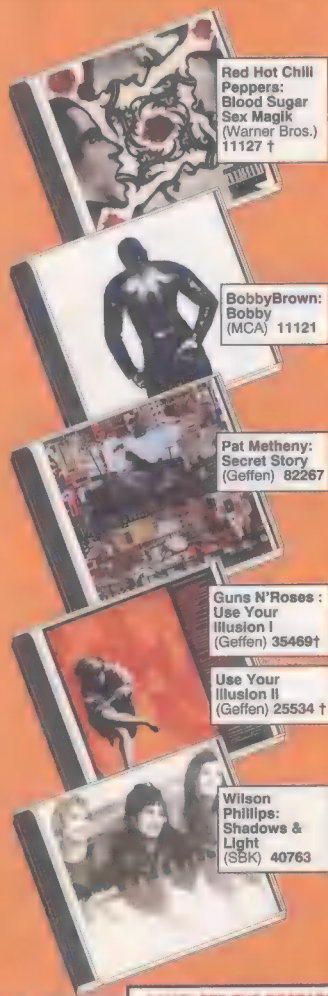
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Beauty and the Beast: Sdtk. (Disney) 10780

Chieftains: The Bells Of Dublin (RCA) 10943

Bryan Adams: Reckless (A&M) 51540

Bing Crosby's Greatest Hits (MCA) 04709

Roy Hargrove: The Vibe (Novus) 54611

Moody Blues: A Question Of Balance (Threshold) 44588

The Mamba Kings: Sdtk. (Elektra) 80250

Sergio Mendes: Brasileiro (Elektra) 53669

Belinda Carlisle: Her Greatest Hits (MCA) 35172

Galway: Greatest Hits, Vol. 2 (RCA) 10746

Guys And Dolls/ New Broadway Cast (RCA Victor) 61964

Bill Haley & The Comets: From The Original Master Tapes (MCA) 83879*

Enya: Watermark (Reprise) 43249

Reba McEntire: For My Broken Heart (MCA) 73624

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Trisha Yearwood: Hearts In Armor (MCA) 21048

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U2
Dire Straits

4 ☐ POP/SOFT ROCK
Bonnie Raitt
Paula Abdul

5 ☐ CLASSICAL(2)
Luciano Pavarotti
Vladimir Horowitz

6 ☐ JAZZ
Dave Grusin
Yellowjackets

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Mötley Crüe
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☐ Mrs.
☐ Ms.

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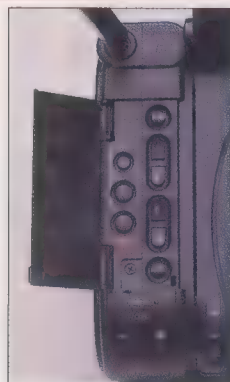
VIDEOTEST
668

SONY 8mm TVCR

LCD screen. It's powered by a rechargeable camcorder battery, so you can watch 8mm tapes anywhere. It even offers stereo sound and a headphone jack so you can get the full impact of rip-roaring action movies without bothering the person next to you. The screen folds down and snaps shut, like the lid of a large compact, for easy carrying.

The GV-S50 comes with a stereo TV tuner (model TGV-3) that attaches to the left side of the TVCR. The TGV-3 tunes in TV stations from its

Video is so much a part of our lives that many find it difficult to leave behind when traveling or commuting. With the Sony GV-S50 TVCR, you don't have to. The GV-S50 combines an 8mm VCR with a four-inch, active-matrix color



Pocket Theater:
Sony's GV-S50 TVCR and its snap-on tuner (inset).

Sony GV-S50 8mm TVCR

Speaker Size:
approx. 1.4 inches

Tape Format & Speeds: 8mm SP and LP (record and play), Hi8 SP (play only)

Video Heads: 2

Cue & Review Search:
forward 9x, reverse 7x

Fast Forward/Rewind Time: 6-1/4 min. for 120 min. cassette

Remote Pause: LANC

Audio: hi-fi AFM stereo

Jacks:
RCA jacks for video/stereo audio input/output, mini jack for external antenna, sub-mini (three-pin) LANC jack, multipin jack for tuner, mini DC jack for RFU, mini headphone jack

Internal Audio Amplifier Power:
200 milliwatts

Tuning Method:
frequency synthesis

Channel Selectors:
programmable scan on tuner

Onscreen Indicators:
operating mode, speed, counter, battery remaining, volume/brightness adjustment, channel, line/AC pack mode, in/out mode, stereo tuner mode

VCR Controls:
play, pause/still, rewind/search, fast forward/search, record, stop, 1/5x slow motion

Preset Method: manual add/erase from scan sequence

Cable Tuning Range:
A-8, A-6, 2 to 7, A-2 to

I, 7 to 13, J to W, W+30 to W+84

Timer: 6-event/1-month

Special Features: still frame, flying erase head, Skip/Scan, insert edit, Mega Bass sound, auto head cleaner, battery meter, discharge function on charger, RF signal boost on tuner, external antenna jack

Absent Features:
frame advance, slow motion, speed play, audio dub, video dub, auto rewind, counter memory, indexing, remote control, PCM digital audio

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:
VCR—250 lines, screen—200 lines

S/N Ratios (dB): unweighted video—41.5 SP, 40 LP; weighted video—48.3 SP, 47.4 LP; chroma AM—42.4 SP, 41 LP; chroma

HIGHLIGHTS

Once you've experienced the way an 8mm TVCR like Sony's GV-

S50 Video Walkman keeps you entertained on cross-country flights and car trips, it's tough to do without it. The GV-S50 combines a tiny, battery-powered, stereo 8mm VCR with a four-inch color LCD screen. A detachable TV tuner/timer adds all the basic features of a standard VCR, yet the whole package weighs just about three pounds. Picture and ease of use are good to very good, audio is average to good and overall performance is good to very good. It's ideal for travelers and reasonably priced at \$1,200.

Price: \$1,200

Weight & Size (h/w/d):
TVCR—2.2 lbs., tuner—0.4 lbs.; TVCR—3-1/4 x 5-7/8 x 5 inches, tuner—3-1/4 x 1-1/8 x 5 inches

Screen Size: 4 inches

Screen Type:
active-matrix LCD

PM—38.8 SP, 38.6 LP

Audio Frequency Response: 50 Hz-10 kHz, +0.1/-3 dB, -9 dB at 20 Hz, -6.8 dB at 20 kHz

Dynamic Range:
68.4 dB

Audio Distortion: 0.4%

RATINGS

Picture:
good/very good

Audio: average/good

Ease of Use:
good/very good

Overall:
good/very good

own antenna, an external antenna or cable, and incorporates a timer for programmed recording.

You can record from either the tuner or line input, so your traveling video library can include tapes recorded from broadcasts, movies copied onto 8mm tape and even prerecorded 8mm movies, which are available in some video stores and from mail-order outlets. We've found personal video players like the

GV-S50 especially entertaining on long-distance flights, which tend to show only mass-market films.

A video output allows the picture from the GV-S50 to be displayed on a larger screen. The unit has its own speaker, plus ■ line-level stereo audio output for connection to a stereo system. Switchable Mega Bass circuitry for the headphone output enhances bass.

The supplied NP-55H battery pow-

ers the TVCR for 50 to 60 minutes, depending on how you use it. An optional NP-77H battery doubles that capacity. If you have a Sony camcorder, its battery will also work with the GV-S50. The unit may also be operated from AC using the supplied adapter/charger, or from ■ vehicle's DC outlet using an optional car battery adapter.

The system allows full record and playback capability at SP and LP speeds for up to five hours on a P6-150 cassette. It also plays Hi8 SP tapes, with quality comparable to that of 8mm video. It can be used in an editing setup—it offers ■ LANC jack for compatibility with many editing controllers and, like all 8mm gear, it has ■ flying erase head.

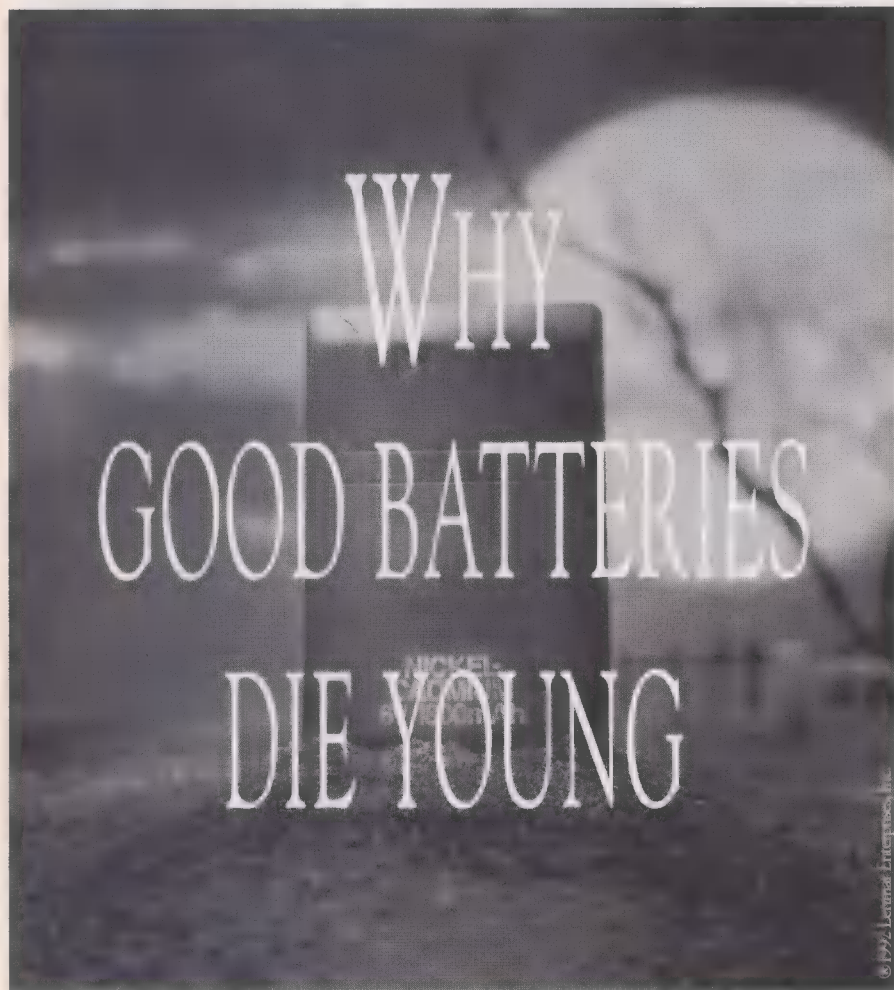
There is no remote control, but optional wired LANC remotes may be used. With its small screen, you'll probably watch the GV-S50 at a close enough distance to make ■ remote unnecessary. However, if you use it to feed a standard TV set, ■ remote would be useful.

With the tuner attached, the GV-S50 is about the size of a fat paperback with the battery at the back and a telescoping antenna near the left rear. The tuner has plus and minus channel scan buttons. A flap further back hides buttons for timer record on/off, timer check, clear, menu, enter and cursor keys. At the back are ■ jack for an external antenna and a switch for tuner/line.

A button on the right front edge releases the top, which opens like a clam shell and swings back past vertical. Much of the inner lid is occupied by the LCD screen. In the hinge area are a row of buttons for menu, enter, brightness minus and plus, and volume minus and plus. The brightness buttons double as left and right cursors in menu mode. The volume buttons double for up and down cursors.

Most of the front serves as the cassette hatch, which moves outward and upward to load a tape. On its top are a window to see the cassette's supply reel and transport controls like play, record and stop. On the stationary part of the top panel are buttons for power, counter reset, display and eject. The input/output jacks run along the right side, with a cover that may be removed but is tricky to replace. The battery (or the power adapter) snaps onto the rear.

The GV-S50 is lots of fun to use as a TV or VCR because it's so simple, and because its small size makes it so personal and intimate. You probably won't want to watch it at more than arm's length. VCR controls are straightforward and well laid out. Play options include bidirectional search, still and 1/5x slow motion. The brightness and volume controls are easy to understand, and



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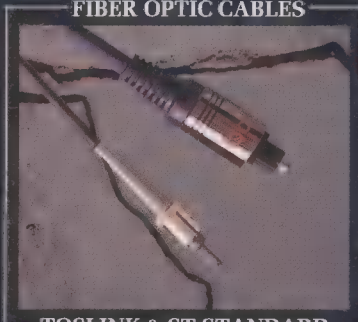
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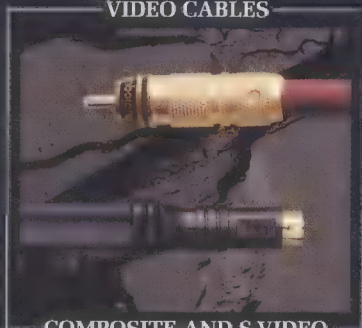
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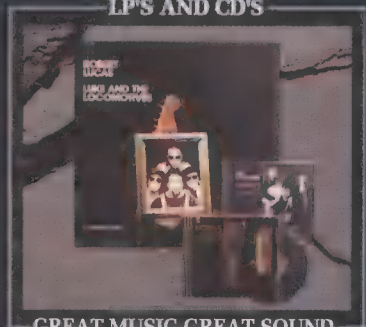
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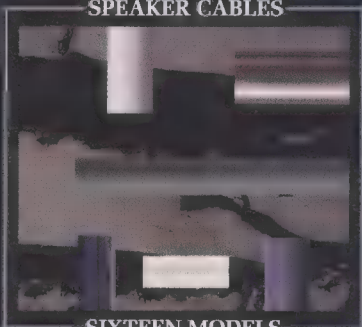
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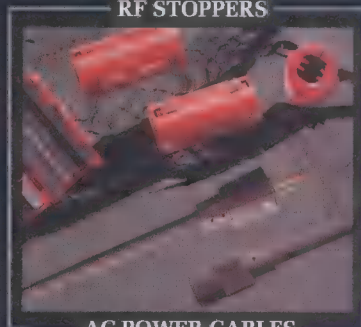
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even the menu system has a sufficiently small number of items to be manageable. The menu options include normal/Mega Bass, SP/LP record, hue (tint), color and slow tracking adjustment.

The tuner is the most complex part. It has its own menu system, with options for timer set, sleep timer, channel, clock set and tuner preset. Setting the clock and timer are no more complex than on other current Sony VCRs. Sleep timer setting for up to five hours in 30-minute increments is equally easy. Presetting the tuner scan sequence is a bit tricky, but you can use the channel option on the menu and the cursors to select any channel directly. Ease of operation is good to very good.

Picture quality is good to very good. The screen has good color and brightness, but as with all LCD screens, contrast suffers if the screen is in strong direct light. The VCR performs as well as those built into most 8mm camcorders. Audio quality is good to very good. The speaker delivers adequate sound for general viewing, but using headphones or an external stereo system vastly improves the sound.

The GV-S50 earns a good to very good overall rating. Its \$1,200 price may

make it a little expensive for only occasional use. But travelers will probably find it a godsend, salvation from the boredom of long flights and commutes, and a surefire way to keep the kids entertained in the back seat on car trips. ■

LASERDISC PLAYER

continued from page 18

accept digital signals. Two orange RCA jacks provide input and output connections for Marantz's RC-5 control system, so the LV500 can be controlled from another room when connected to a Marantz receiver with multiroom capability.

Many controls on the remote are not on the front panel, and vice versa. The bottom of the remote has a shuttle dial. Hitting the D-level button above turns the dial into a volume control that adjusts the level of the LV500's digital audio output signal. The play, stop, scan, skip and side selector buttons can be illuminated at the touch of a long button along the side. The top of the remote houses buttons for multispeed playback of CAV discs, audio output, a 10-digit keypad and various search functions.

Because the LV500 has no digital effects, you can't get still frames, slow motion or speed play from CLV discs, which are much more common and less expensive than CAV discs. However, the LV500 scans CLV discs more cleanly than many past players, alternating still frames with black frames instead of the rolling, distorted picture most players produce on CLV scan.

The disc tray is a bit less robust than on earlier laserdisc players and may require gentle handling. Unfortunately, most newer laserdisc players share this fault. Otherwise, the LV500 offers a wide range of playback options. Ease of operation is very good to excellent.

Except for chroma PM noise, the picture quality of the LV500 ranks among the best achieved by combi players. Compared to combi players, it is excellent, but a bit short of the best laserdisc player we've tested, Pioneer's laserdisc-only LD-S2, which is more than four times as expensive. Audio quality is excellent.

We rate the LV500 excellent overall. If you're looking for a combi player with side-changing and don't want to spend an extra \$300 or so for digital effects, give the LV500 a look. ■

MAKING A GREAT VIDEO INCLUDES QUALITY SOUND TOO!

After using your camcorder the first time, you realize that the built-in microphone picks up sounds from all directions, including those you

don't want. And, when shooting from a distance, you can't hear your subject's voice clearly. Azden, the leader in quality audio for video, offers a full line of microphones to make your sound as good as your pictures.



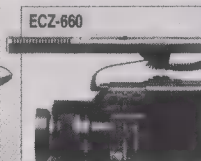
This powerful professional miniature VHF wireless system has a range of over 300 feet. It allows you to shoot from a distance and pick up your subject's voice clearly. It has 2 switchable frequencies, and it comes with 2 mics (handheld and clip-on). The transmitter clips to the subject's belt, and the mini receiver can attach to the camera (shoe mount & velcro included) or be kept in your breast pocket.



A professional VHF handheld microphone system with no wires. All the same features, and receiver as the WMS-PRO.



Headset with boom mic for adding narration as you shoot. Your voice becomes the dominant sound recorded. Or, use it to monitor sound you're recording.



Full-size directional mic. Allows you to zoom in on subject's voice, reducing side noises. Range 35-40 feet.



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HOME THEATER

BY BRENT BUTTERWORTH

The ins and outs of TV set inputs

When most people choose a new TV set, they look over the lineup at a department store, pick the prettiest picture and pull out their Visa card. Or they select the set with the most bells and whistles. But as video systems have grown from simple combinations of TV sets and VCRs to home theaters with cabinets full of gear, a TV set's rear panel—home to its input jacks—has become as important as the controls on its front.

Choosing a TV set that lacks necessary inputs could mean sacrificing picture quality, or having to buy an extra piece of gear to make the components in a system work together. To help you avoid these complications, we'll describe each type of input, then help you decide which to look for.

The most common input is the F-connector, a threaded metal tube about half an inch long. F-connectors accept radio-frequency (RF) signals from an antenna or a cable, or from video sources like VCRs and laserdisc players. RF signals, which carry both video and audio, must pass through a tuner before they can be sent to a picture tube. Some sets have three F-connectors—two for RF input, one for RF output.

The second most common input is the RCA composite video jack. It's yellow, about a quarter of an inch across. RCA video jacks accept signals from any consumer video component. They carry *baseband* signals—pure video that can be routed straight to a monitor without going through a tuner. The brightness (also known as luminance, or Y) and color (chrominance, or C) parts of the video signal are combined, which is why this is called a composite video jack.

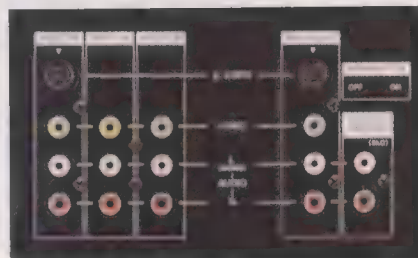
S-video jacks, on the other hand, carry *component* video—brightness and color signals run on separate lines. The jacks look like small black ports with five tiny holes.

Bottom-of-the-line TV sets which have only a single F-connector for input might be okay for the most casual use—in the kitchen, perhaps—but running a signal from a VCR or laserdisc player through the TV tuner degrades the picture. Using the RF jack to connect a video source also permits RF interference to mar the picture with wavy di-

agonal lines. Also, many newer laserdisc players have no RF output. To connect one of these to a TV set with only an RF input, you'll have to use a separate RF modulator, or daisy-chain the disc player through a VCR.

Basic RCA video/stereo audio inputs serve well in systems with VHS VCRs and inexpensive laserdisc players. But anyone who owns or plans to buy S-VHS or Hi8 equipment or a top-of-the-line laserdisc player should demand a TV set with an S-video input.

Contrary to popular belief, S-video inputs don't provide more resolution than RCA composite inputs. But by keeping the color and brightness signals separate, S-video inputs can virtually eliminate hanging dots (ragged, crawling horizontal edges), dot crawl (crawling vertical edges) and some color impuri-



Jack Attack: The rear panel of a Sony 31-inch TV set shows the variety of TV inputs now available.

ties. These phenomena are caused by cross-chroma/cross-luma interference, which occurs when NTSC brightness and color signals are mixed. However, some video formats mix color and brightness signals in the recording process, diluting the positive effects of using S-video inputs.

With S-VHS and Hi8 VCRs and camcorders, using S-video TV inputs is always a good idea. These components make good use of S-video's separate color and brightness lines because the two signals are recorded separately—the color signal on videotape is AM, and the brightness signal is FM. Sometimes the signals are mixed in production, but properly produced tapes (and all S-VHS and Hi8 camcorder tapes) provide discrete brightness and color signals—and pictures free of crawl effects if you use your TV set's S-video input.

On laserdiscs, however, color and brightness signals are recorded together as FM, and must be separated. If your TV set has only an RCA video input, you have to use the TV's Y/C separator. But if your TV set has an S-video input and your laserdisc player has an S-video output, you might choose to rely on the separator in your laserdisc player.

We usually find that the Y/C separators in TV sets are better than those in inexpensive laserdisc players. But the digital Y/C separators used in many top-notch players tend to outperform those in most TV sets. The only reliable way to tell which is better is to check it yourself. Try using the S-video jacks, then try the RCA video jacks, and use the one that produces the least dot crawl and hanging dots.

Home theater buffs will want at least two S-video or video inputs, or even more—after all, who knows what you'll want to add to your system next year? However, those who already use an A/V switcher or receiver can probably get by with a single input. If you have an 8mm or Hi8 camcorder, you'll find a set of front-panel inputs indispensable—much more convenient than hooking up your camcorder to the back of your TV set or VCR. Of course, if your VCR or A/V receiver already has front-panel inputs, you can use those.

If you subscribe to scrambled cable channels, you'll find the triple F-connector arrangement helpful. Cable boxes often require the use of a splitter and an A/B switch if you want to use your TV remote control to change channels. The extra F-connectors allow you to retain the functionality of your remote control by connecting the cable to the first RF input, then connecting the cable box to the set via the remaining RF input and output. This way, the splitter and A/B switch are effectively built into your TV set.

Your best bet is to buy a set that offers at least one more input than your system requires. After all, most people buy a new set every seven years, and with video technology's continuing rapid advancement, it's anyone's guess as to what types of components you'll be using in a few years.

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N • E • W PRODUCTS

BY BRIAN CLARK

Mitsubishi delivers first 40-inch tube TV.



▲ THE NEXT GENERATION

Fujix's newest compact video projector is the Fujix P701 (\$999). It uses a single LCD panel to project a picture from 14 to 100 inches, with 70 the optimum size. It connects to any source with video outputs, and has two hi-fi stereo speakers and a mic jack. (For additional information, circle 154 on the Reader Service Card.)



▶ BREAKING THE 40-INCH BARRIER

The first 40-inch direct-view television set is now available from Mitsubishi, which introduced the first 35-inch direct-view set in 1986. Priced at \$4,999, the CS-40FX1 is the largest tube TV set made, and is designed for compatibility with other Mitsubishi home theater components, with accommodations for external speaker systems. The set has two built-in speakers and MTS stereo sound. (For additional information, circle 157 on the Reader Service Card.)



◀ DRY 8

Sony's bright yellow rubber sports case seals out moisture and protects videotape from knocks and bumps. The case comes with a Sony Metal-HG 8mm tape, which uses an improved backcoating. The case and the 120-minute tape are priced at \$14.99. (For additional information, circle 155 on the Reader Service Card.)



▼ Hi8 IN THE SIDE POCKET

Minolta's Master 8-848 Hi8 camcorder fits in a pocket and features electronic image stabilization. The 8x (6-48mm) lens can extend to 16x or 64x thanks to a digital zoom feature. The 848 (\$1,722) also offers a 16:9 cinema mode for recording, as well as monochrome and sepia-tone digital filters. (For additional information, circle 156 on the Reader Service Card.)



▼ HOME BASE

Yashica's KX-V1U Hi8 camcorder (\$1,600) includes a "home terminal," a special docking unit that stays connected to a TV or a VCR. The camcorder feeds a signal to the terminal through a 20-pin connector on the bottom of the camcorder. The terminal also serves as a charger for the KX-V1U's new lithium ion battery, which holds charges longer than nickel cadmium batteries and can be recharged at any time. Other features include FM hi-fi stereo audio and 8x zoom ranging from 5.9 to 47.2mm. (For additional information, circle 153 on the Reader Service Card.)



▲ VIEWING ON THE RUN

The Model 17 from Memorex is a model of portability and function. It combines an 8mm VCR and a five-inch color TV for \$800. Features include digital auto tracking, a flying erase head, freeze frame and onscreen displays. It can record from its own tuner or another VCR or camcorder. (For additional information, circle 152 on the Reader Service Card.)

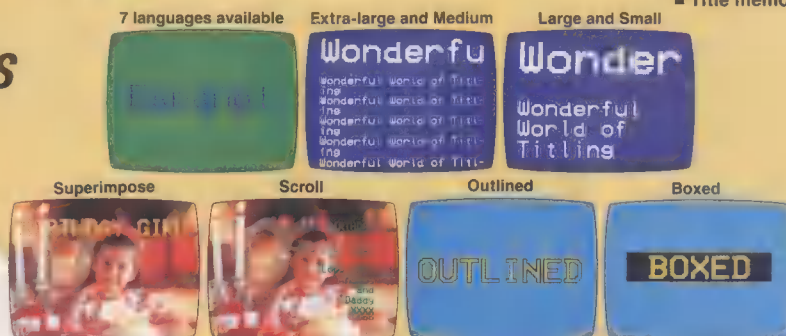


JX-T88
CHARACTER
GENERATOR

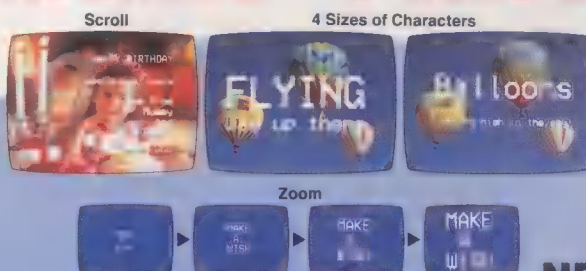
Compatible with
Super VHS

Once you've shot great footage, make sure the "final cut" is the best it can be! Add a professional touch with titles and descriptions in a variety of languages, colors and sizes. It's easy with the JX-T88 from JVC — The Inventor of VHS!

- Complete alphabets for 7 languages (English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Swedish, and Danish)
- Choose from 8 colors (red, yellow, green, cyan, blue, magenta, white, and black) and 4 character sizes (S, M, L and XL)
- Numerous effects including character outlining and boxing, and title fade in/out, superimpose and 4-speed scrolling
- Y/C separator and mixer circuits; independent S-Video terminals
- Built-in Standard Signal Generator (SSG)
- 8-page still title and 2-page scroll title memory
- Return monitor function
- Title memory backup function



Add Character To Your Home Video



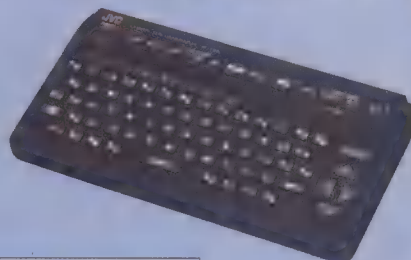
The JX-T66 enables you to add character to your video at home or on the go. Its incredibly compact size makes it easy to use, even outdoors. Creativity was never more convenient.

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- Y/C mixer circuit converts S-Video signals into composite signals
- Built-in Standard Signal Generator (SSG)
- 6-page still title, 1-page zoom title, and 1-page scroll title memory
- Title memory backup function

NEW

JX-T66
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Compatible with
Super VHS



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- Color intensity adjustment
- Image enhancer
- Audio mixing with level meter
- Headphone jack with volume



JX-S900
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- Dual operation with key lock function
- Video/audio processor loop
- Auxiliary audio inputs
- Two sets of monitor outputs with S-Video terminals; one with a Y/C separator circuit



JX-S300
AV Selector

- 4 AV inputs, 3 AV outputs, plus a monitor output with 2 sets of audio jacks
- Compatible with Super VHS VCRs
- Front panel AV inputs including an S-Video terminal
- Dubbing/editing possible between up to 3 VCRs
- Remote control for input mode selection and power ON/OFF
- Built-in Y/C separator
- Initial setting switch for timer operation



JX-S100
AV Selector

- Compatible with input and output from Super VHS VCRs
- 4 AV inputs, 3 AV outputs, plus 2 monitor terminals
- Front panel AV inputs including an S-Video terminal
- 4-way editing mode including Super VHS to Super VHS via Y/C separated signals
- Convenient "passive design" requires no power supply

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TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

BY FRANK BEACHAM

A feisty new ghostbuster vows to exorcise TV's double vision

Television ghosts—those blurred, multiple images that have plagued TV watchers since broadcasting's first flickerings—will soon begin to fade from TV screens like phantoms losing their ectoplasm. The U.S. television industry, backed by receiver manufacturers, is preparing to attack the problem with a single ghostbusting system developed by Philips Laboratories.

The assault will be launched immediately on cable TV systems that pick up off-the-air broadcasts for retransmission to subscribers. The first circuits for high-end TV sets should be available late next year, according to a Philips official. However, not all gremlins will vanish at once. It will probably take at least three years to include the system in reasonably priced TV sets, and it could take several more years for ghostbusting sets to work

ference is multipath distortion, a condition that also affects radio station signals. It occurs when a broadcast signal is reflected off an object like a tall building or a mountain. Duplicate or shadow images of the picture accompany the primary image.

While cablecasters who retransmit over-the-air programs can begin to use the Philips system immediately, in other uses it will require the cooperation of both broadcasters and TV set manufacturers. Broadcasters would add a "training" or reference signal to the vertical blanking interval of the video portion of their transmissions. TV sets equipped with the system would compare the training signal to a reference version in its own memory circuits, adjusting the training signal to match the reference signal. It would then make a similar cor-

by the FCC for the vertical interval reference (VIR). This is a color alignment signal, dating from 1974, that automatically calibrates color pictures on TV sets with circuits able to read the VIR. But TV manufacturers stopped making such sets in 1985, and the signal is considered to be obsolete.

Moreover, TV stations will be able to use some of the equipment used for the VIR signal to produce the ghost-canceling signal. A Philips executive estimates that most stations will be able to convert the equipment with a simple chip swap costing as little as \$200.

Ghostbusting will sweep through the TV world in three stages, in the view of John Dahlquist, a marketing executive for Philips Broadband Networks. The first step will be to build the system into professional cable equipment. Next comes external units. Finally, the circuits will be added to home TV sets.

"It's a matter of integration," says Dahlquist. "Today the system requires a large box filled with chips and other electronic components. As we move along the curve of integration, the lab will put more and more on single chips. The final product will be a single chip."

Cable TV systems are now being offered a professional system for about \$4,000, says Dahlquist. "Many cable companies have severe ghost problems, and they'll jump on this technology immediately. At this level, a \$4,000 box can improve pictures dramatically for tens of thousands of subscribers."

In the second stage, expected to begin late in 1993, an outboard box costing about \$500 will become available. It could be used for master antenna systems and by individuals. The box "could also be incorporated into high-end large-screen and projection TV receivers," according to Dahlquist. Smaller TV sets, the kind used with rabbit ears, will have to wait for the single chip to be developed.

The system only applies to NTSC broadcasts, not to high-definition transmissions. Indeed, each HDTV standard being considered by the FCC includes its own integral anti-ghosting system. However, future TV sets which receive both NTSC and HDTV transmissions will have to use a separate anti-ghosting circuit for each transmission system. ■



Disappearing Act: TVs show the impact of Philips' system on a picture (left) suffering from multipath distortion.

their way into most of America's nearly 100 million TV households.

Nevertheless, the agreement to use a single standard is a landmark decision. It comes, as we reported last December ("TV's Ghostbusting Olympics"), after three years of tests on five systems proposed by some of the video industry's biggest players, including Thomson, Zenith, Sarnoff, Samsung and AT&T. The Advanced Television Systems Committee, which ran the tests, unanimously voted for the Philips system, which will be licensed to other manufacturers.

The technical name for ghost inter-

rection to clean up the television picture.

Because the signal is broadcast in the blanking interval and does not otherwise affect transmissions, the system doesn't need the approval of the Federal Communications Commission. However, broadcasters are asking the FCC to set aside line 19 in the vertical interval for the training signal.

The request is not likely to face any opposition, according to Lynn Claudy, director of advanced engineering for the National Association of Broadcasters, even though line 19 is currently reserved

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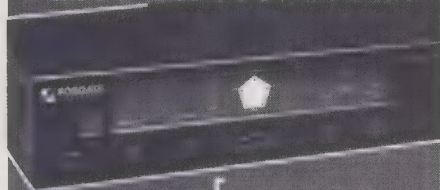
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Much more than a single purpose surround decoder, the Model Four incorporates six input A/V switching, with direct remote access to any source or surround mode. "S" video inputs and a separate record output are also included.

Whether you are starting a new home theater system, or upgrading an existing one, consider the affordable, new Fosgate-Audionics Model Four. It is truly a sound investment.



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Q & A

Q What exactly does "double-azimuth" refer to? Most new VCRs have this phrase printed on the cabinet, or letters like "DA4." I know it refers to the video heads, but how do double-azimuth heads differ from regular video heads?

Albert Fontana
Sacramento, California

A A VCR needs at least two video heads to record or play a picture. Each head is like a tiny horseshoe magnet, with a north and a south pole, separated by a small space called the gap. This gap creates a magnetic pattern as it moves across the tape surface. To prevent a head from accidentally reading information from the wrong track, the head gap is cut at a slight angle, rather than 90 degrees. On a two-head VHS deck, one head is angled at plus 7 degrees from the head drum axis, while the other is angled at minus 7 degrees.

But video head design gets complicated when the VCR can record at more than one speed, since the width of the head must match the space available on the tape for each video track. To complicate matters more, the heads must also be able to produce special effects like still frames and slow motion without video noise.

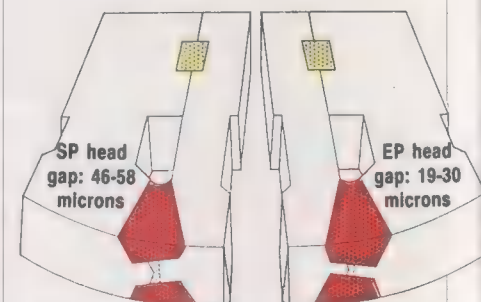
The four-head, double-azimuth system, first used by Matsushita and now virtually an industry standard, solves many of these problems. The four video heads are arranged in two closely spaced pairs. Two wide heads are used for SP recording, and two narrow ones for EP. Each set is mounted almost 180 degrees opposite the other pair. For regular SP or EP record or playback, only the heads for these speeds are used. But in special-effects mode, one wide head and one narrow head, both with the same azimuth angle (hence the phrase double-azimuth), are used to read the information from a single video field. By reconstructing a single video frame out of one video field, read successively by two different video heads, pictures free of noise and jitter are possible.

Finally—and this is the really big advantage—when you activate the search mode in SP, all four video heads are used to scan the tape at once. A micro-

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

How double-azimuth video heads work

processor automatically matches the width of the heads to the width of the tracks, reducing the size of the noise bars considerably.



Gap Games: Double-azimuth head configuration showing head gaps optimized for SP and EP playback and angled to enhance video track separation.

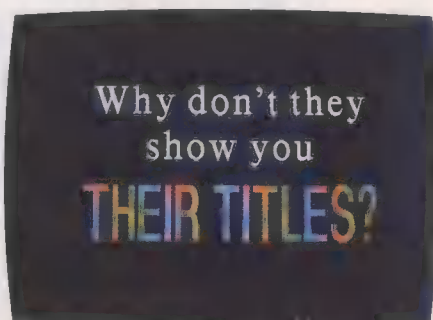
Q I have a Toshiba M447 VCR hooked up to cable. Unfortunately, whenever I tape something off my premium movie channel, there's a loud hum in the audio. The hum isn't on the other channels. My cable company has run three different lines into the house and tried three different converter boxes but the hum persists. Toshiba says there's no problem with the VCR. What can I do?

Stephen Downing
Fredericksburg, Virginia

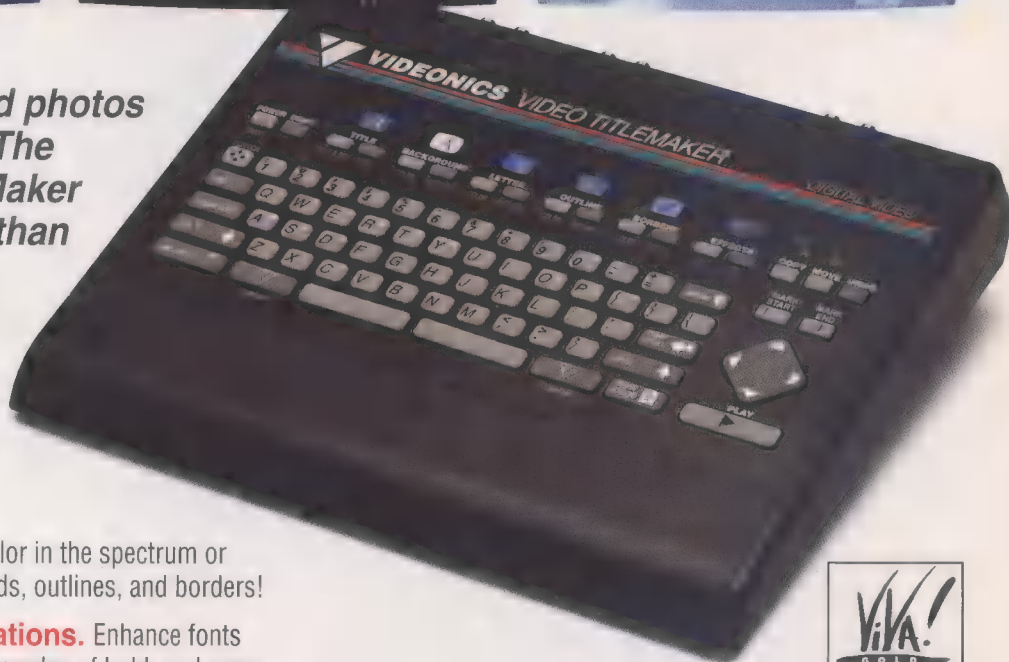
A Have you considered renting or borrowing another make or model of VCR to see if the hum occurs with them as well? If so, this would indicate the problem is with the hookup, and not the VCR. You might also try hooking up your Toshiba to the cable input at a neighbor's house to see if the hum occurs there. If so, this would isolate your VCR as the culprit. Once you run these tests, and your case is on a firmer footing, you'll be in a better position to get either Toshiba or the cable company to help you resolve the problem.

Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address queries to Q&A, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

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CAM CORNER

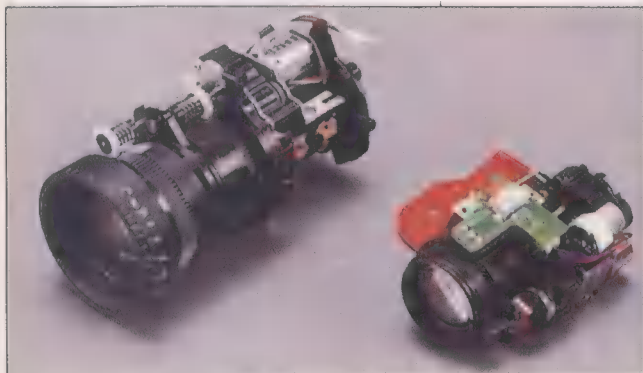
BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

Inner-focus lenses breathe life into the 'dead zone'

Nearly every camcorder enthusiast has experienced the horrors of the dead zone, the optical limbo between a lens' minimum focusing distance in normal mode, and the maximum area the lens can cover in macro. In the dead zone, which typically covers a range from about one foot to four feet from the lens, the camcorder refuses to focus, even in manual mode. The dead zone can haunt your most creative shots, and prevent you from framing close-ups the way you want. But a recent development, the "inner-focus" lens, is bringing life into the dead zone, eliminating the focusing problem while opening up new creative shooting possibilities.

The macro mode on conventional camcorder lenses, while useful for shooting stamps, bugs and other tiny subjects, is useless for shots that call for less magnification. For example, a normal macro lens can only capture a small portion of a snapshot. Switching out of macro mode would capture anything surrounding the snapshot within a few inches. Framing the photo properly would call for the use of an add-on close-up lens—not an expensive accessory, but an awkward one at best.

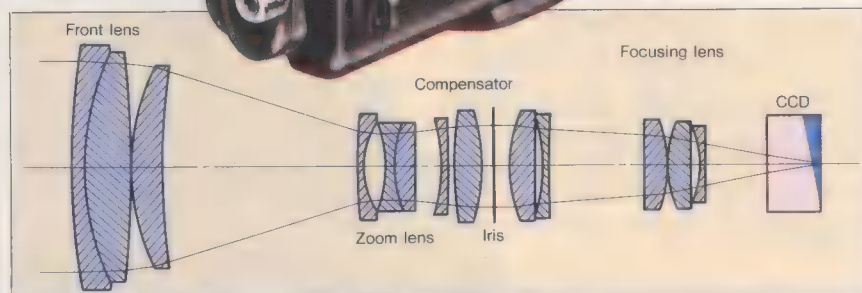
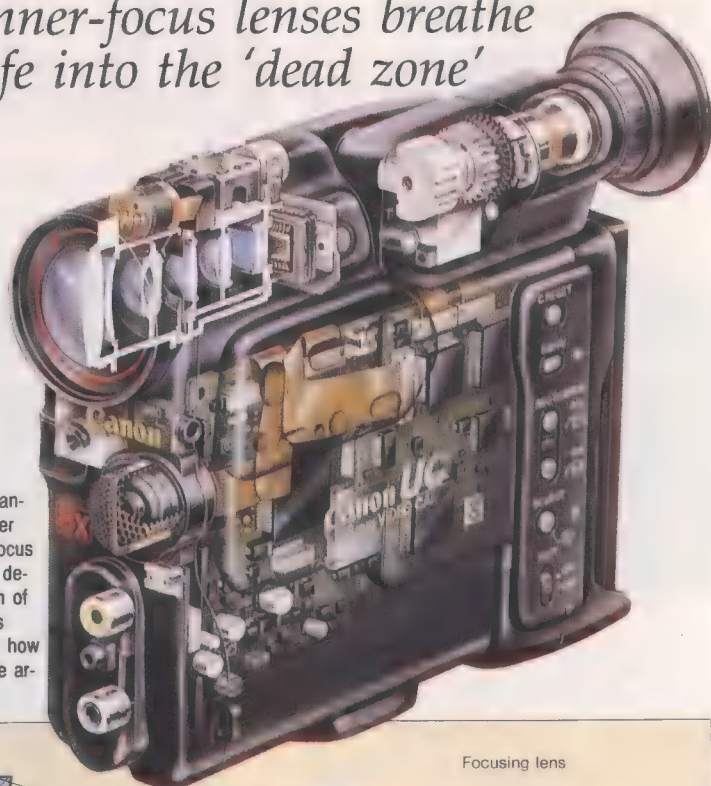
Minolta's VHS-C C3300 was the first camcorder that allowed videographers to venture into the dead zone. It used a revolutionary inner-focus lens that automatically adjusted the focus for any distance between infinity and the macro mode. As the camcorder moved closer to the object, the image would get larger and larger in the viewfinder, but stay in sharp focus the whole time.



More With Less: Canon's 8x inner-focus lens uses nine elements, while its larger conventional 8x lens uses 12.

Inner Sanctum:

Cross-section of Canon's UC1 camcorder shows how inner-focus lens aids compact design, while diagram of an inner-focus lens from Sanyo shows how its 13 elements are arranged.



This important innovation spread rapidly to other models and formats as well. It's now on virtually all VHS-C and S-VHS-C camcorders, and many 8mm, Hi8 and full-size VHS units.

From a design point of view, manufacturers love these new lenses. Since only a small inner lens actually moves, a much smaller and lighter motor that draws less power can be used for focusing. This reduces camera size and weight, and extends battery life to boot. Moreover, inner-focus lenses are sealed. There's no risk dust and dirt will slip into the lens mount, as

they can with conventional designs. And the systems focus well even when you add a supplementary wide-angle or telephoto lens.

In testing several camcorders with full-focus lens systems, I immediately appreciated the extra convenience: There's simply less restriction on your creativity. In one shot in my backyard, I walked slowly toward an orange tree, moving from an expansive wide-angle shot that took in almost the entire yard, right up to a frame-filling shot of a ripe orange. Then I moved in even closer to record the trek of a tiny bug as it worked its way across the orange's dimpled surface. Sony's Hi8 CCD-TR81 did all the work, automatically keeping the lens in sharp focus, while I "dollied" into the subject with my feet.

In another test, I mounted the TR81 on a tripod and aimed it at a small table in front of me. Using this improvised stage, I was able *continued on page 104*



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- Lighting tricks the pros use to set the right mood.

- How to use miniatures to add realism to your videos.

- Imaginative effects you can achieve with filters, lenses, and homemade masks.

- How to master professional skills — from handheld moves and tripod shooting to camera angles, perspective and depth of field.

- Editing ideas that turn raw footage into masterpieces.

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BY BRENT BUTTERWORTH



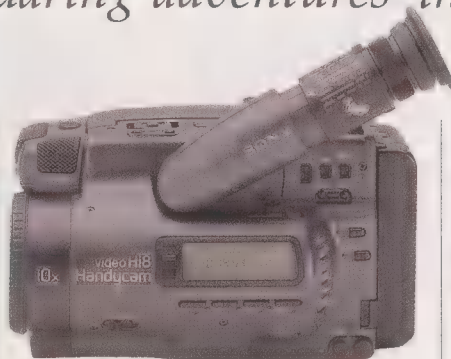
THE YEAR'S BEST PRODUCTS

Fifteen innovative, daring adventures in high performance.

Technological progress now runs at such ■ breakneck pace, we end each year wondering if there's anything left for electronics wizards to invent. But just as we seem to reach the ultimate in picture, sound and convenience, brilliant product development engineers pull another rabbit from the hat. They squeeze another ounce of performance from our 50-year-old video standard. They push home theater sound beyond the limits imposed by our living spaces. And they solve problems we thought unsolvable, creating big-screen TVs that fit in any room, camcorder image stabilizers that don't degrade the picture, and sound systems that meet the conflicting demands of movies and music.

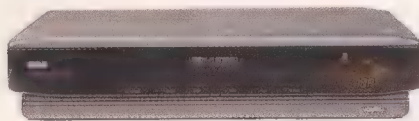
The situation is similar among video programmers. Those who create the movies and original shows we experience on videotapes, laserdiscs and, now, multimedia discs grow more daring and inventive with each passing year.

Video Magazine recognizes these achievements with its annual ViVA Gold! awards for video equipment and programs. In selecting components to honor, we chose some winners for their state-of-the-art performance, others for innovative features or outstanding value. Among video programs (see "Top Tapes and Discs"), the emphasis is on quality and originality. With so many great products to choose from, picking the 15 ViVA Gold! product winners described below and the 10 tapes and discs in the following pages wasn't easy. But we hope the process never gets any easier!



SONY CCD-TR101 Hi8 CAMCORDER

We thought last year's CCD-TR81 was nearly perfect, but with the TR101, Sony has taken the Hi8 subcompact a big step further. The TR101's image stabilizer uses ■ revolutionary new optical technology to avoid the picture degradation most electronic stabilizers cause. (Give half the credit to Canon, Sony's partner in developing this technology.) Like other Sony Hi8s, it's easy and comfortable to shoot with, but still packs all the manual options video hotshots demand. And the picture is astonishing—you might even mistake it for laserdisc.



RCA VR667 VHS VCR

Once again, RCA steals the lead in VCR programming. Last year's ViVA-winning VR690 was the first deck with VCR Plus; this year's VR667 is the first with VCR Plus circuitry that also controls a cable box. Just punch in ■ code

number from *TV Guide* or your local listings, and the VR667 does the rest—it selects the channel on the cable box, starts recording and stops when the show's over. Could programming be any easier?



PARKERVISION CAMERAMAN

One of the most revolutionary camcorder accessories ever created, the CameraMan moves camcorder buffs to the other side of the lens. As long as you carry its wireless microphone, the CameraMan will track you everywhere you go. You can also use it as a remote-controlled hired hand by punching directional buttons on the remote, or by switching between four user-defined zoom, pan and tilt presets. But the real magic of CameraMan is that it can make hams out of camera-shy subjects—just set it up and pass around the mic.



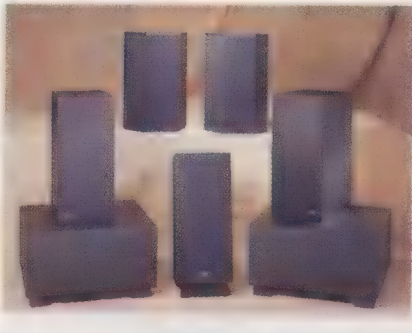
KODAK PHOTO CD

With the Photo CD, Kodak brings quality electronic photography within the reach of average consumers. Pop a Photo CD in Kodak's Photo CD player or a CD-I machine, and you can display the photos on a TV screen. You can also have film-quality prints made of the images on a CD. And best of all, you don't have to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on a new digital camera—all it takes to shoot Photo CD images is a conventional 35mm film camera. We think the potential for this powerful new format has barely been tapped.

cable systems. You can forget about dot crawl and hanging dots, too—Mitsubishi's digital comb filters by far are the best in the business.

FOSGATE THX SYSTEM

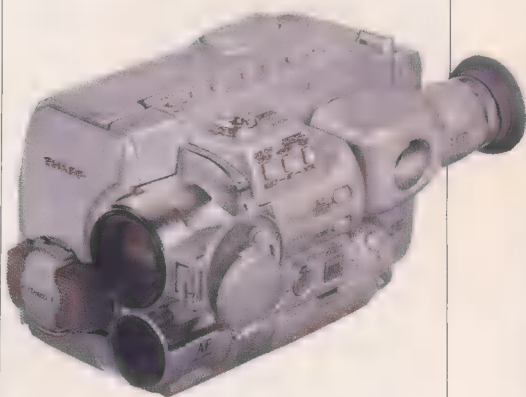
The Schwarzenegger of home theater sound, Fosgate's THX-certified surround-sound system pumps out awesome volume without breaking a sweat. The speakers seem indestructible, but still have the finesse to reproduce every detail and nuance of movie soundtracks. The decoder's analog circuitry produces razor-sharp Pro-Logic decoding, complete with all the THX tweaks, and does an equally outstanding job when used for music, either in traditional two-channel mode or in any of several enjoyable music surround modes. A special four-channel amplifier makes it easy to take advantage of the system's split dipolar speakers.



SHARP VL-MX8U TWINCAM 8mm CAMCORDER

For years, we've been begging camcorder manufacturers to abandon the zoom

bars and give us extra wide-angle range. Sharp's first entry in the 8mm format does just that—and a whole lot more. A separate, fixed-focus wide-angle lens and sensor provide a 62-degree angle of view. You can switch instantly from a wide-angle shot to a telephoto shot from the 12x zoom lens, wipe or dissolve between them, create picture-in-picture effects and even preview your telephoto shots. A Hi8 version is also available.



VIDEONICS TITLEMAKER

Until this \$500 miracle came along, home video editors had to use complicated, expensive desktop video gear to generate professional-looking titles. The TitleMaker's characters look good enough to use on TV, and the device is



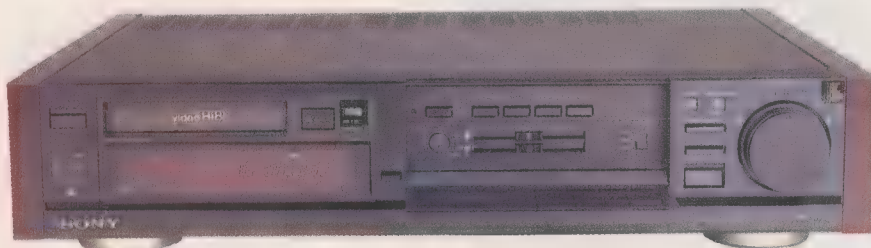
so simple and intuitive that the manual may never leave your desk drawer. The TitleMaker is packed with fonts, backgrounds and special effects for any occasion, and can be programmed for hands-free operation. ▶



MITSUBISHI CS-35X7 35-INCH MONITOR/RECEIVER

Is this \$7,500 marvel the most advanced TV set ever created? It's certainly the most outstanding offering in the fiercely competitive field of 35-inch monitors. The CS-35X7 is the first set with a ghost-reduction circuit, which works on any NTSC broadcast—you don't have to wait until your local broadcasters adopt the Philips system recently chosen by the National Association of Broadcasters. A dual-conversion tuner clears up the lousy reception that often plagues

BEST PRODUCTS



SONY EV-S3000 Hi8 VCR

Easily one of our all-time favorite editing VCRs, the EV-S3000 could win a ViVA on picture quality alone. Its full-field timebase corrector provides perfectly stable images, and you'd need a D-2 VCR to beat its clean still frames and slow motion. Big buttons and a simple layout make it an ergonomic dream. Unlike many editing decks, it's even great for timeshifting, thanks to dedicated programming buttons and an LCD window on the remote control.

DEFINITIVE TECHNOLOGY HOME THEATER SPEAKER SYSTEM

Audio/video systems seldom strike a good balance between the demands of

movie sound and music sound. Usually the movie sound is great and the music sound is mediocre, or vice versa. By combining two of its great music speakers with three more designed for home theater sound, Definitive Technology has created what, for many people, could be the ideal speaker system—wonderful music and movie sound, a reasonable \$1,900 price and designs that fit gracefully into any living room.

CANON 10X AND 250mm CAMCORDER LENSES

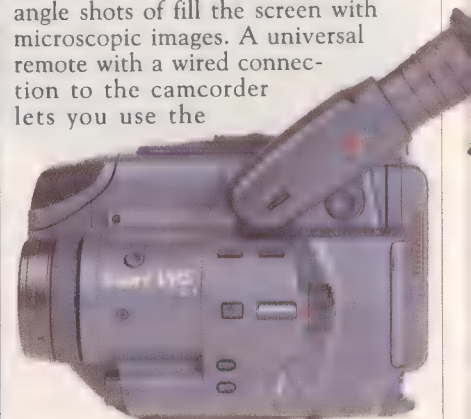
Canon seems to be putting as much technological wizardry into its L1 Hi8 camcorder system as some companies put into their entire camcorder lines.

These new lenses, which conform to the VL-mount standard used on the L1, bring fresh capabilities to the industry's most versatile camcorder. The 10x lens incorporates the same optical image stabilization technology used in Sony's CCD-TR101 camcorder. The 250mm lens provides 32x optical magnification from the L1's standard 8mm wide-angle focal length. Using this lens, the L1's 2x optical telephoto adapter and its 2x digital zoom, we were about to shoot clear 128x images, filling the frame with a car that was about a mile away!



JVC GR-SZ1 S-VHS-C CAMCORDER

Many new camcorders carry one or two interesting features, but JVC's tiny GR-SZ1 packs about a dozen, some of which we never even imagined. Its three-piece lens system lets you capture super-wide-angle shots of fill the screen with microscopic images. A universal remote with a wired connection to the camcorder lets you use the



camcorder's eight-scene editing controller to start and stop a VCR for automated editing. And an eight-position dial accesses many auto exposure modes and special effects. There's even a snapshot mode that frames a still with black borders and adds a shutter-click sound.



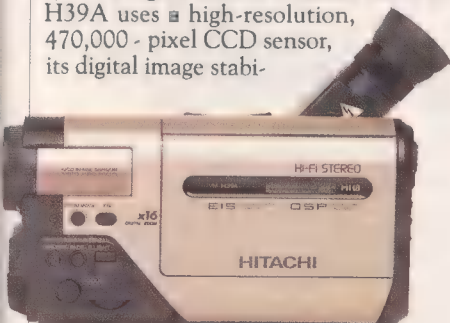


SONY KPR-41EXR95 41-INCH MONITOR/RECEIVER

Finally, a rear-projection TV set for the average home! This sleek big-screen offers the great picture and sound we've come to expect from Sony rear-projection sets, but it's no deeper than a 20-inch direct-view set. The picture's big enough for high-impact home theater, but the set doesn't commandeer a room the way boxy rear-projection sets do.

HITACHI VM-H39A Hi8 CAMCORDER

Everyone we know who has put a palm to this pocket-size machine has marveled at its light weight and comfortable feel. Play back its tapes, though, and you'll be even more amazed at the quality of its digital effects. Because the VM-H39A uses a high-resolution, 470,000-pixel CCD sensor, its digital image stabi-



lizer doesn't degrade the picture one bit, and the digital zoom produces clear images well into the 30x magnification range. Sepia-tone, black-and-white and sunset modes add unusual creative options. And even though the VM-H39A's electronics are very sophisticated, the camcorder's point-and-shoot design makes it extremely easy to operate. A color viewfinder provides a more comfortable, natural shooting feel, and lets you judge color rendition easily.



MINOLTA MASTER PRO 8-918 Hi8 CAMCORDER

Consumer camcorders keep creeping toward true broadcast quality, and Minolta's 8-918 comes closer than any other. By using two CCD image sensors—one for green, one for red and blue—the 8-918 produces the best color we've seen from a consumer camcorder. By processing the colors separately, the camcorder also maintains more accurate exposures, and the camera section achieves 480 lines of horizontal resolution. Optional lens attachments provide extra wide-angle and telephoto ranges.



NEWS

January 1993

Number One

Are you looking to enhance the quality of your television viewing? If so, a home satellite system offers you the finest in audio and video reception plus the widest variety of programming choices. And if you are looking for the best in satellite television entertainment, look no further than HBO Satellite Services. You'll get more hit movies, top-notch comedy, superstar concerts, sporting events, and original movies on HBO and Cinemax than anywhere else.

Go to your local satellite dealer to get started. He'll help you select a satellite antenna (or dish), a receiver and a descrambler. Just as in buying a VCR or stereo system, there are a number of different brands and models available — each with a different combination of features. Your local satellite dealer will be able to demonstrate systems in various price ranges that meet your needs and work best in your part of the country. Once your system is installed, operating it is as easy as pushing a button on your remote control.

Your next step is to choose the programming services you want. HBO Satellite Services offers a variety of programming packages to suit your needs. With **SuperPak** you'll get 22 of your favorite channels, including HBO, Cinemax, ESPN and CNN. With **SuperPak Plus**, you'll get those same popular channels *plus five* of the most requested channels: American Movie Classics, WGN, Prime Network, WWOR and WSBK-Boston.

And now, Multiplex makes these packages an even better value. With Multiplex, you receive three channels of HBO and two channels of Cinemax — at no extra charge! Plus, you still get HBO and Cinemax's east and west coast feeds. That means you can choose a hit movie on HBO, cutting edge comedy on HBO2 or an original movie on HBO3. Or, choose from a romance on Cinemax or a thriller on Cinemax 2. It is simply the most flexible way to watch television.

**If you need more information
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BY KENNETH KORMAN



TOP TAPES & DISCS

Ten trend-setting titles lead the class of '92.

From standard VHS cassettes to frame-grabbing CAV laserdiscs to five-inch multimedia CDs, the watchword for video software in 1992 was *diversity*. How about ■ laserdisc-only compilation of Busby Berkeley's most elaborate production numbers? (See this month's "Tapes & Discs.") Perhaps you'd enjoy a private, interactive tutorial on playing jazz guitar? (See below.) Or maybe an anniversary release of a beloved film, complete with a new made-for-videocassette documentary? (Try 1992's special editions of *Casablanca*, *King Kong* or *The Graduate*.) Whatever your tastes, however narrow your interests, chances are something was released on video this year that was literally *made for you*.

All of which makes choosing the best tapes and discs of 1992 ■ more daunting task than ever before. Quality, substance and originality were our guiding principles. Given the number of excellent releases in 1992, we regret we can only honor 10, but the winners of this year's VIVA Gold! awards in video programming, presented below in alphabetical order, are truly extraordinary.



THE AGE OF EXPLORATION SERIES (MILESTONE CASSETTES, LUMIVISION LASERDISCS)

The eight videos in this outstanding series come as the result of Milestone Film and Video's three-year project to

restore and release a variety of films made between 1913 and 1933, all of which feature exotic cultures presented in documentaries or fictional stories. Artists like F.W. Murnau and Robert Flaherty traveled to the ends of the earth to make these fascinating films; some now stand as the only artifacts of long-lost peoples. All feature the original music or newly commissioned scores from the lands depicted. The first four titles (*Tabu*, *Grass*, *90° South* and *In the Land of the War Canoes*) are now available on disc from Lumivision, offering an even clearer window into the past.



THE COMMITMENTS (FOXVIDEO/IMAGE ENTERTAINMENT LASERDISC)

We have yet to find a single viewer who wasn't utterly charmed by Alan Parker's warm and funny portrait of a fictional soul band from working-class Dublin. Image Entertainment's disc edition earns the nod largely for its faithful reproduction of the film's extraordinary music. A two-volume CD soundtrack offers the same soul classics in studio-sanitized versions, so if you want the film's original performances in all their ragged glory, you've got to get this laserdisc. Each song is chapter-encoded for easy access.

EYES ON THE PRIZE (PBS/PACIFIC ARTS CASSETTES AND LASERDISCS)

Henry Hampton's brilliant 1987 history of the civil rights movement in America has been resurrected by PBS in one of the most important video releases



of this or any year. The first six hour-long episodes are available individually on cassette or in standard boxed sets of tapes or discs, and the final eight hours will be released in the same configurations early in '93. But a leather-boxed, limited-edition set of all 14 cassettes, along with Hampton's hardcover book, a CD and exclusive volume-by-volume taped introductions from the filmmaker, is also in stores now. We can imagine no last-minute holiday gift we'd rather receive.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF LOONEY TUNES, VOLS. 1-3 (MGM/UA LASERDISCS)

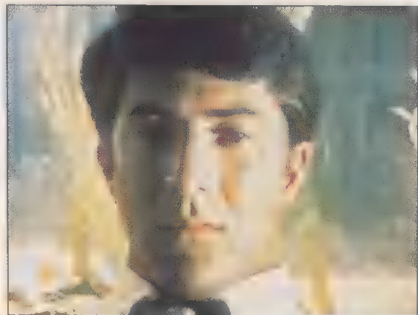
If there were a "people's choice" award for laserdiscs, these three 70-cartoon sets would probably take this year's prize. Each volume includes five discs with nine hours of running time. The first set sold out quickly upon release, actually becoming hard to find for a time despite its \$100 price tag. And no wonder: From Friz Freleng's musical ex-



travaganzas to Tex Avery's merciless hysterics, there's something here for just about everyone. We were pleased to find each side devoted to a particular director, character or theme to facilitate intermittent viewing; ■ 27-hour binge is tempting, but we're not sure we'd survive it.

THE GRADUATE 25th-ANNIVERSARY EDITION (NEW LINE CASSETTE)

This extravagant package offers final proof that connoisseur-driven laserdiscs have permanently changed the mass-market world of VHS. Its extensive supplement, which includes ■ new documentary and the original theatrical trailer, was clearly inspired by all the "special-edition" laserdiscs that now come out each month. Even more signif-



icant is the letterboxed transfer: The studios are finally starting to recognize the sophistication of videocassette collectors. And it's a healthy sign for the entire video software field that New Line can offer all this for only \$19.95.

JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS (CRITERION LASERDISC)

We could have easily filled this list with outstanding recent additions to the Criterion Collection: *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, *Boyz n the Hood* and *Dr. Strangelove* were all considered for the

1992 ViVA Gold!s. But *Jason and the Argonauts* emerged victorious for reasons that include special-effects wizard Ray Harryhausen's engaging analog-track commentary and the disc's lengthy supplement, both of which give away just enough of Harryhausen's secrets to capture your imagination but not enough to



spoil the magic of his work. Most of us remember how much we loved this movie as kids, and it's a thrill to see it finally receive the respectful treatment it deserves.

JAWS (MCA/UNIVERSAL LASERDISC)

This long-delayed and much-anticipated widescreen edition of Steven Spielberg's most exciting movie provided this year's best argument for letterboxing. Made just before the home video era, *Jaws* finds Spielberg using every inch of the screen to terrifying effect; he would soon start shooting his films flat or with a "safe area" to accommodate the shape of home screens. This laserdisc's visual impact is so great, we scarcely noticed that the film was made, and presented here, in monaural sound.

PAUL SIMON'S CONCERT IN THE PARK (WARNER REPRISE CASSETTE AND LASERDISC)

Home theater isn't just for movies anymore: This state-of-the-art concert video fulfills the potential of the form like no other we've seen. Picture and sound are both impeccable, and Simon's awesome band of mostly South African and Brazilian musicians pushes his songs across cultural and generational lines to reach a truly broad audience. It's not that this is "the next best thing to being there"—experiencing this concert on a

first-rate home system is far preferable to squinting at ■ distant stage while standing amid 750,000 rain-soaked New Yorkers.

PRIVATE LESSON SERIES (PHILIPS/SONIC IMAGES CD-I DISCS)

None of the multimedia CD systems on the market has yet taken the world by storm, but ■ software series developed for Philips' CD-I system reminded us again how much a well-made interactive disc can offer. The *Private Lesson Series* comprises two separate volumes, "Jazz Guitar" and "Classical Guitar." Each offers instruction that can be customized for all proficiency levels, a large library of background information and much more. These discs earn the first ViVA Gold! awarded to an interactive program. The level of interactivity is high and ingenious—you just can't get this kind of instruction from ■ book—and we had more fun browsing through these discs than any others we tried this year.



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS 35th-ANNIVERSARY EDITION (PARAMOUNT CASSETTES, PIONEER LASERDISCS)

This all-time popular favorite has been released many times in many forms, but it's never looked or sounded like this. Pioneer's Joseph Caporiccio oversaw the film's first-ever Dolby Surround audio mix, and the new transfer's colors are breathtaking. Cecil B. DeMille's onscreen intro and other segments have been restored to preserve the movie's original presentation in theaters. As a result, *The Ten Commandments* is now a home theater classic. Besides, who could resist Edward G. Robinson and Vincent Price as head-dress-wearing Egyptian scoundrels? ■

SNEAK PREVIEW

*From TVs to CCDs,
an inside guide to
the new year's most
exciting advances.*



Table Titan:
Pioneer's 40-inch rear-projection TV for Japanese videophiles sits neatly on a table top.



3 Portables:
Sony Party Vision LCD projector (above) throws a 30-inch picture, while two new portable CD-I players

by Philips (top right) and Kyocera are aimed mostly at professionals.



If your New Year's resolution involves a promise to stop buying exotic new video components, expect to have a tough time keeping it: 1993 promises a bounty of video innovations. And not just new products. High-technology firms are reinventing everything from viewfinders to transmission standards, and we'll be able to sample much of their work in the coming year.

The range is extraordinary. We'll be seeing progressive new camcorders, TV sets, multimedia systems, game machines and computer video programs. Important steps will also be taken to prepare for major systems, like HDTV and direct-broadcast satellites, that will not become available until later in the decade. Here's a preview of what to look for as 1993 unfolds.

The best place to start is at the annual Japan Electronics Show. Held this past fall at a sprawling fairground in Osaka, the show is a window into the coming year's technology. Many of the new products displayed at the show went immediately into the Japanese video market. But some will find their way to U.S. stores later this year.

This story was written by Stan Pinkwas with contributions from James M. Barry, Frank Beacham and Ron Goldberg.

'93



TV sets came in all shapes and sizes, but most notably in the widescreen, 16:9 aspect ratio just introduced in the U.S. Manufacturers displayed numerous widescreen sets—in both direct-view and projection models, designed both for the NTSC standard and Hi-Vision, Japan's HDTV system.

Other new wrinkles in TV design included a conventional 40-inch projection set designed by Pioneer to serve as a table model, and Sharp's largest flat-screen monitor. This is a 16.5-inch, 16:9 LCD display intended for use on a wall. In LCD projection, Sony showed a tiny, \$500 projector it calls Party Vision that weighs less than a pound. It comes with a six-inch screen and projects a watchable image as large as 30 inches. Although there are no U.S. plans yet for these products, they indicate two directions in which TV displays are headed: larger and more compact.



Widescreen Console: Sharp's 32-inch Wide-Vision TV is among numerous 16:9 sets in Japan.

New camcorders received a lot of attention. Sharp's Hi8 ViewCam set showgoers buzzing with its radical use of a four-inch color LCD monitor as a viewfinder. It's available in Japan for about \$1,750 and due here next month, at a price still to be announced.

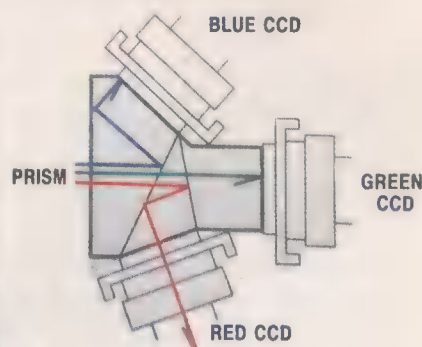


Flat and Wide: Sharp's 16.5-inch LCD display, previewed in Japan, features a wide aspect ratio.

THREE-CHIP COLOR

Potentially more revolutionary are Sony's Hi8 Handycam Pro and Panasonic's S-VHS-C Blenvie Pro. Each camcorder, like professional video cameras, uses a light-sensing system that includes three CCD sensors and a prism. The Panasonic unit weighs under two pounds and uses 1/3-inch CCDs, each with 270,000 pixels, for a horizontal resolution of 530 lines.

Coming just six years after broadcasters began using three-CCD cameras, they represent a major breakthrough in consumer technology. For the first time, the image quality of consumer video equipment will challenge that of the pros. Paul Goeggler, Sony product manager for professional broadcast cameras, says the move from one to three CCD sensors will mean "a quantum improve-



3-Chip Camcorder: Sony's Handycam Pro (top) promises broadcast-quality video, thanks to a light sensor (above) that uses an optical prism to direct light to three CCD chips, one for each primary color.

ment" in performance for consumers. Single-chip camcorders, he believes, have "reached the top of the plateau for future development."

The three-chip camcorders dramatically improve color resolution and rendition, and reduce a blurring effect called aliasing. "When you have a striped filter, as in single-chip camcorders, you have to separate the colors electrically," explains Goeggler. "This process does not work well near blacks or whites. Typically, dark colors are forced to black, and light areas to white." If someone has a shiny spot on his face, for example, it tends to go white. But an optic prism on three-chip camcorders significantly reduces this effect by splitting colors into their red, green and blue components before reaching the CCDs.

Although there's no U.S. date for the Panasonic version, the Sony Handycam is expected to arrive here in March at a price less than \$3,000.

PICKING A STANDARD

Closer to home, the key event to

SNEAK PREVIEW

watch for this year will be the selection of a U.S. transmission standard for HDTV. A testing committee for the Federal Communications Commission has been evaluating competing HDTV systems from five groups of companies and will recommend one of the systems in February for final tests. Before the end of the year, the FCC will formally select one of the systems, presumably the recommended one, as the U.S. HDTV standard.

Another significant trend to watch this year is the gathering momentum behind digital technology—especially as it's applied to television to create what FCC Chairman Alfred Sikes calls "digital advanced television," which he describes as a more powerful kind of HDTV. "The importance of this transition cannot be overstated," says Sikes.

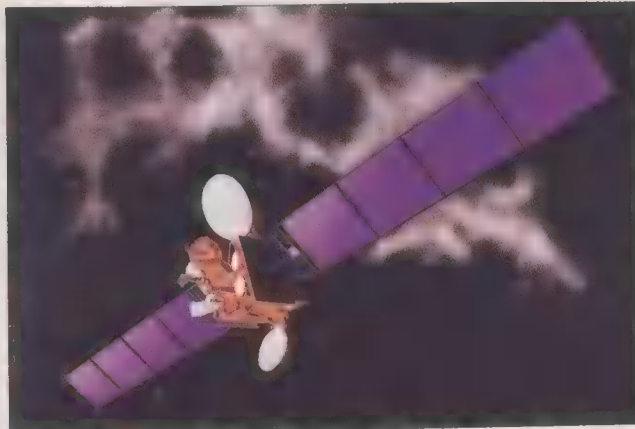
Digital TV, Sikes predicts, will enable ordinary homes to receive hundreds of channels of all varieties. These could include channels devoted to cable TV, rental movies, videogames, music CDs,



Thin as a Wallet: Super-slim Crystaltron TV has a four-inch LCD screen that stays bright in daylight.

interactive programs, phone and computer services, data networks, and medical and security services—in any combination a subscriber prefers.

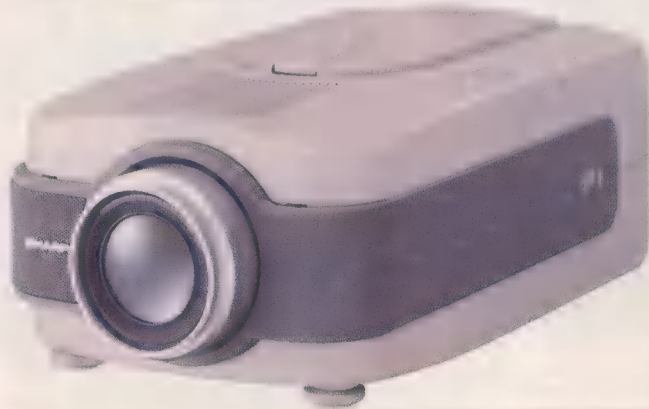
The technology for this will move a giant step closer this year with the launch in December of an unmanned Ariadne rocket carrying into orbit the first of two direct-broadcast satellites. A few months later, DirecTV, a project of Hughes Communications, plans to begin



delivering more than 100 channels to TV sets throughout the U.S. Home receivers, made by RCA and consisting of an 18-inch dish and a digital decoder box, will connect with each user's TV set and phone line. The lightweight dish can be easily installed on windowsills, roof lines or railings.

DirecTV is such a large and encompassing project that it is also leading to groundbreaking work in satellite communications, digital video compression, computer manufacturing, encryption systems and consumer service technology. It even promises to revolutionize the distribution of TV programming.

Another new transmission mode—video by telephone line—will be the subject of numerous new experiments in 1993. In one important project scheduled to begin early in the year, the NYNEX Corp. and Liberty Cable Television will create a video dial tone by running fiber-optic phone lines to three large Manhattan apartment buildings.



Compact Projection: New Sharp LCD projector, previewed in Japan, uses a single high-definition LCD panel to further shrink source for big-screen pictures.



Space and Time: A new generation of telecommunications satellites, and the prototype for a video clock with a 14-inch LCD screen that switches images every 15 minutes.

Residents will be able to receive cable TV programs through their phone lines in a way that will let them watch what they want to watch when they want to watch. Residents will even be able to dial live video cameras attached to the buildings to check street conditions.

DESKTOP VIDEO

Digital technology and the pending HDTV decision are also tightening the relationship between video and computing. If, as expected, the FCC chooses a digital HDTV format, desktop video will prosper. Personal computers and video components alike will be designed to accept signals from the new HDTV standard, bringing us closer to a universal video standard. Imagine being able to shoot camcorder footage of the kids, edit it in your home computer without suffering any generation loss, then phone the results to Grandma, who will be able to play in on her TV set, no matter which country she lives in.

In 1992, Apple advanced desktop video by unleashing *QuickTime*, a popular introduction to the important concept of video compression. This year, Microsoft will premier a similar protocol for IBM-type computers. Expect also to see the first consumer-level products for real digital video editing; that is, products that let users store, manipulate and transmit video as computer data.

For example, SuperMac will be offering its new Digital Film production system for the Macintosh, which may do for editing what the Video Toaster has done for special effects. Digital Film promises full-motion, full-frame video that can be written to a hard drive, edited and fed back out to videotape. This will be a major breakthrough, especially since it will cost a fraction of what a good off-line editing facility runs.

MULTI-HORIZONS

The spread of digital technology will lead to new attempts by hardware makers and programmers to make multimedia products friendlier and more powerful in 1993. Video and computer-based systems using CD-ROM discs will become more accessible, with more major companies introducing new CD-

ROM-based systems. However, incompatibility among multimedia systems will still be a bugaboo.

This trend was evident at the Electronics Show in Osaka, where half a dozen companies showed new CD-I players. They included a version from Panasonic capable of playing full-motion video and portable players with four-inch screens from Sanyo, Kyocera and Philips. The Philips model is already being offered here in professional circles.

Apple's projects include a handheld multimedia player, code-named Sweetpea, that, it is hinted, will be able to play two hours of full-motion video using a single CD-ROM. It's been promised for the spring. Later in 1993, Nintendo will attempt to leapfrog Sega's new 16-bit disc drive with a 32-bit CD-ROM drive for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System. Sony will contribute to the fray with a console able to play CD-ROMs and SNES cartridges.

Indeed, by the end of the year, the game scene will be filled with discs promising all sorts of interactive action and varying amounts of video, which brings us to 1994...but that's another story. ■

TECH TIPS

Fighting facial fatigue

Shooting camcorder footage for several minutes can tire out facial muscles, because you have to squint with one eye. To avoid facial fatigue, wear a patch over the eye not watching the viewfinder. Eyepatches are available at drugstores.

Jean-Francois Boucher
Montreal, Quebec

Simple surround

For inexpensive surround-sound effects with a conventional stereo system, try connecting a third speaker to the positive (red) speaker terminals on a stereo amplifier. Position the speaker in the rear of the room, pointing toward the ceiling. You won't get the dramatic effects of Dolby Pro-Logic, but you will get reasonably good surround effects. This technique is ideal for bedroom systems.

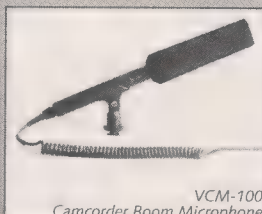
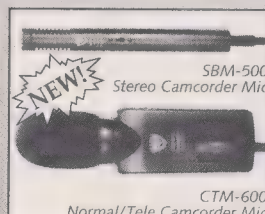
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Slippery Slope:
When shooting on snowy, steep mountainsides, it's important to get a solid footing.

Action, excitement, smiling faces and dazzling scenery make skiing a great subject for home video. But those who venture onto the slopes packing video gear and high hopes frequently find it's all downhill from there. Ski video presents many obstacles, and we're not just talking about Volkswagen-size moguls. But don't despair. If you use common sense, heed the helpful hints we're about to present and practice, practice, practice, you'll soon be mastering those moguls—if not with your skis, at least with your camcorder.

The most obvious obstacles for the skiing videographer are the conditions under which ski videos are shot. Even in ideal conditions—friendly sunshine and

fluffy Rocky Mountain powder—sub-freezing temperatures and snow can be problematic for you and your video equipment. Then there's the problem of transporting your gear. And finally, there's the matter of finding a good vantage point and getting there—no small obstacle when you're talking about shooting on the side of a mountain.

None of these problems are insurmountable if you're prepared. Most skiers wouldn't think of heading for the slopes without first preparing for the outing. Yet those who plan to videotape skiing often give it no more thought than making sure the camcorder is packed. If you want to return with a tape full of exciting memories rather than dull disappointments, you should review the following checklist a day or

How you and your

two before ■ shoot:

- **Get charged up.** Cold weather saps the life from a camcorder battery as quickly as a face-first plunge into a snowbank numbs your nose. If you don't have a spare battery, buy one. Make sure your batteries are fully charged before leaving home. Once at your destination, try to keep the spare in a warm, accessible place indoors. If that's not possible, or if you need immediate access to the spare, carry it under your ski parka as close to your skin as possible. A T-shirt pocket should accommodate VHS-C or 8mm camcorder batteries.

If the battery won't fit comfortably under your jacket, keep it in a parka pocket or backpack alongside one of those chemical heat packs used to warm frozen toes and fingers. But keep the heat pack in an old mitten so the battery doesn't get too hot.

- **Play weatherman.** If it's going to snow or rain, you might want to pick another day to do your videotaping, unless you own one of the new weatherproof sport camcorders. If you own a conventional camcorder and are determined to shoot in bad weather, protect the equipment from precipitation. It's a good idea to use some sort of moisture protection in any case—anyone who skis is bound to fall on occasion, and the camcorder is sure to hit the snow when that happens.

Check with your local video retailer or the equipment manufacturer to see if a special housing is available for your

LL TAPER

camcorder can survive skiing's cold, snow & spills.

model. A less expensive alternative is a freezer storage bag and a heavy rubber band. Stick the camcorder inside the bag with the lens and any light and focusing sensors sticking out the open end. Secure the opening snugly with the rubber band, then test the camcorder to make sure you can activate its controls through the plastic. If your camcorder has ■ moving lens barrel or ■ zoom lever, make sure you haven't obstructed the movement of these parts.

● **Pick your shots.** If you're planning to videotape ■ family outing, you'll want to travel as light as possible to keep up with the rest of the gang. But don't sacrifice ■ good shot just to lighten your load. The steadiness of a tripod (or at least a monopod) is important to many types of shots. It's especially helpful when you're shooting on a steep slope in stiff, cumbersome ski boots. And when you shoot mostly from one location, as when shooting ■ ski race or taping

friends for instructional purposes, the ease it brings to tilting and panning will make a tripod well worth schlepping.

● **Call for help.** At most major resorts, you'll be on your own. But smaller ski areas might bend over backwards to help you, especially if you're a season pass holder. They might, for example, provide an electric outlet to keep a battery charged or give you a safe place to keep

your equipment when you're done. Some areas will let you ride the lift without skis or even let you hitch a ride on a grooming machine or an all-terrain vehicle to help you reach a special vantage point. In any case, you don't know what kind of cooperation you'll

*continued
on page 106*

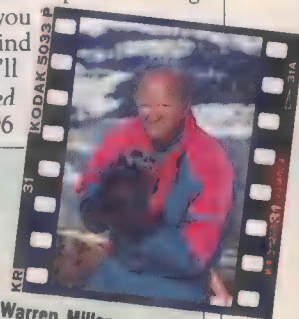
Skiing's Shooting Star

He is the Cecil B. DeMille of ski movies, a man whose work has set the standard by which all other ski films are judged and whose name has become synonymous with the genre. The name is Warren Miller, and it belongs to a guy who is better recognized by voice than appearance. That's because he has narrated every ski movie he's made since his first in 1949. Back then, he treated his narration as ■ way "to cover up mundane photography," but more than 400 films later, narration has become one of his trademarks.

The work that goes into his narratives helps account for Miller's success. He spends about three months of six- to eight-hour days writing a script for one of his annual ski films. "Then we have 10 or 15 rehearsals with live audiences over a period of six weeks until it sounds like it's ad-libbed," he says. His films are released on video a year after their debut—the latest, *Born to Ski*, came out in November from Columbia TriStar—and are available in video and ski stores.

Miller's films are filled with great footage of daredevil stunts, phenomenal skiing and gorgeous scenery. But so are a lot of other ski films. What distinguishes Miller's

continued on page 106



Warren Miller



BY RON GOLDBERG

Macintosh Moviemaking

COMPUTING



WITH *Five programs to turbocharge your desktop epics.*



VIDEO



Fast F/X:
Timeline from *VideoShop* shows a fade being applied frame by frame to a two-second video clip.

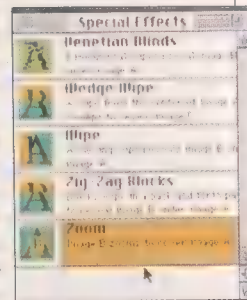
Automated Art:
Using *Premiere*, painterly touches are easily added to video by the frame or by the scene.



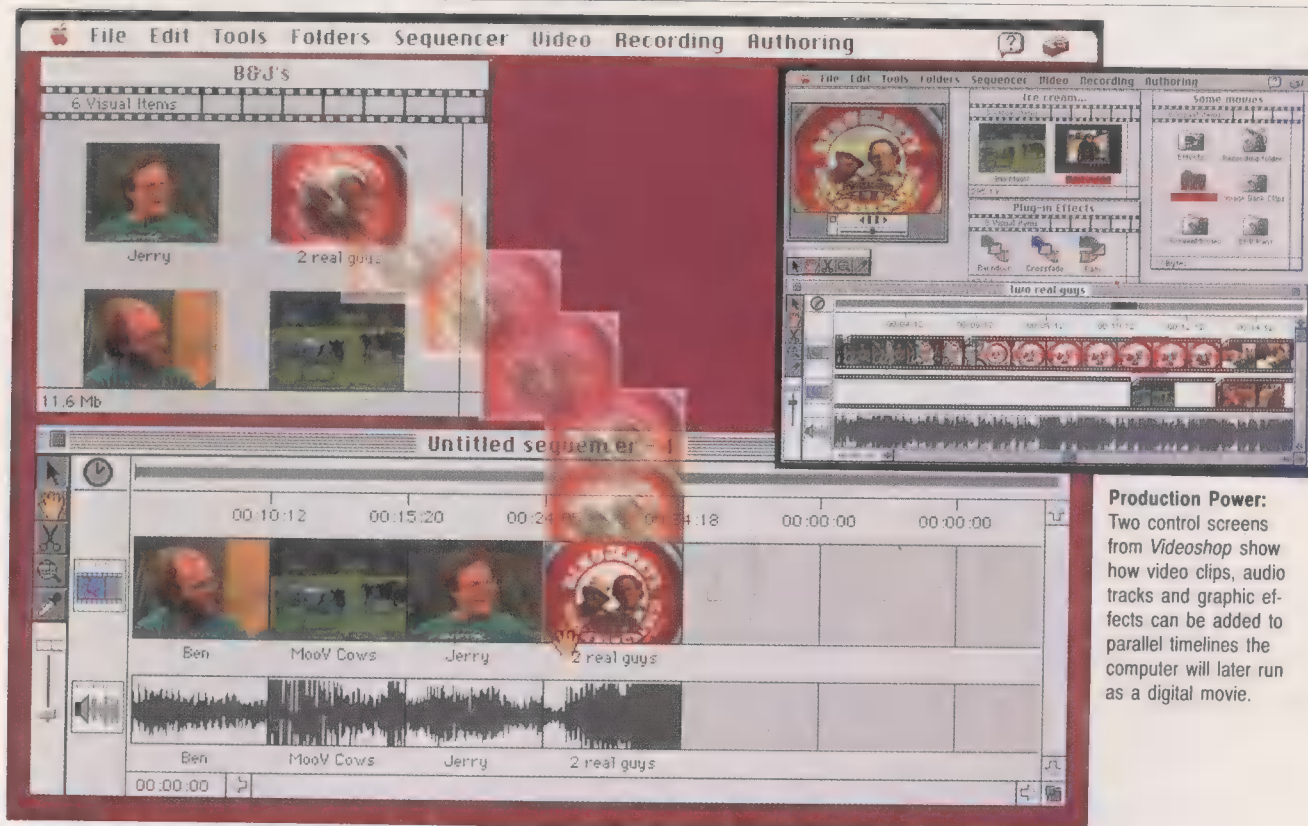
In the world of video, the phrase "technological breakthrough" is usually greeted with healthy skepticism. When a breakthrough does occur (which isn't often), it propels both the medium and the market to a new plateau from which there's no turning back. Desktop video enthusiasts have waited patiently for such a breakthrough. Now there are signs it has occurred, with Apple's Macintosh line of computers serving as the launching pad.

Basically, desktop video involves using a computer in the video editing process. Usually, this means adding graphics, animation, special effects and titles to a video. It can also mean using the computer as an edit controller to operate such video sources as camcorders and VCRs. But desktop video enthusiasts have never been able to "cut and paste" video the way writers shift sentences or graphic artists manipulate text and scanned images in a desktop publishing system. Desktop video enthusiasts have harbored a legitimate gripe: If high-resolution color pictures and CD-quality audio can be digitized into the computer, why not video?

The introduction of *QuickTime* by Apple Computer answers the question. Through *QuickTime*, desktop video is finally making the great leap to the next stage of development—pure digital postproduction. Not so much a program as an operating environment, *QuickTime* is a software extension for Macintosh computers that allows a user to record and play digitized video, as well as files in



One-Touch Menu:
Premiere's special-effects palette includes previews of each effect.



Production Power:
Two control screens from *Videoshop* show how video clips, audio tracks and graphic effects can be added to parallel timelines the computer will later run as a digital movie.

other "dynamic" media like animation and sound.

Desktop video enthusiasts have always known the future would be digital—that they would capture, manipulate and store moving video as computer information. Once a video segment is digitized and stored in memory, or on a hard disk, it can be processed on the computer's terms—you can cut, paste, stretch, retouch, or do most anything else to it as many times as you want without touching the original source material. Random-access editing and an almost limitless palette of special effects are only the most obvious advantages.

In this article, we'll discuss how *QuickTime* works, the hardware needed

to run it and what it can do for you. We'll also evaluate a quartet of software programs that harness *QuickTime* (or can be used with it) in various ways. And in a sidebar, we'll help fledgling Macintosh videographers select an expansion board that will let them integrate their video and computer equipment.

GETTING STARTED

By itself, *QuickTime* won't launch you into the world of digital video. You need other software and hardware, as well as plenty of memory, a lot of hard disk space and, for now, a Macintosh computer. *QuickTime* captures video and audio through a digitizer board that

plugs inside most Macintosh computers. As it's fed to the computer, the video is compressed and stored either on the fly (in memory) or on the hard disk. Compression is necessary because full-motion video consumes an enormous amount of memory. The problem of finding a workable compression technique has kept digital video in the dark all these years.

Audio for *QuickTime* files (which are called "movies") doesn't have to be captured along with the video. It can also be imported from an outboard digitizer (or sampler) or the built-in microphone found on newer Macs.

QuickTime in its first incarnation is hardly a substitute for the full-motion, full-frame video we all take for granted. Not all Macs can play motion video at the industry standard of 30 frames per second. A powerful machine like the Mac Quadra might be able to play 30 frames per second, but a smaller one like the Mac LC will probably be limited to 15 frames per second.

The onscreen window in which *QuickTime* plays is usually fairly small—1-3/4 by 2-1/4 inches on a typical computer monitor. Larger windows are possible, but they drastically drain computing power, which degrades both picture resolution and clarity of motion. Apple's *QuickTime* compression algorithms range from 5:1 to 25:1, or 25 megabytes of video on one megabyte of disk space. But even with this substantial compression, movies still take up a lot of disk



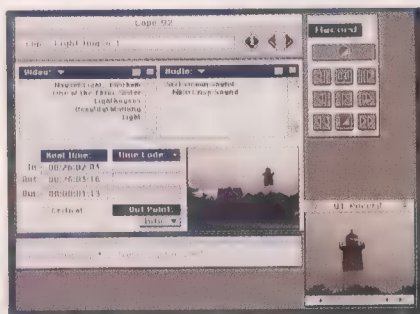
The Plot Quickens:
Screen shot showing *QuickTime* compressing, by a factor of more than 10, a high-resolution motocross image taken from a Photo CD disc.

COMPUTING

space on your computer.

Just how much depends on the level of video quality you choose. For example, a 12-second movie at "normal" quality might fit on a standard 800-kilobyte floppy disk. "Better" quality takes more space, and "draft" quality uses less. A 30-second movie at full frame and image quality can easily gobble up several megabytes of disk space, so it's easy to see why this first version of *QuickTime* requires a powerful machine with lots of storage capability.

The official Apple requirements for running *QuickTime 1.0* are a color-capable Macintosh with at least two megabytes of RAM (I strongly recommend more) and System 6.07 (or higher) oper-



Tool Time: Video Toolkit puts two VCRs under the control of your computer to help you create edit lists.

ating software. If you want to play movies of any reasonable length on other Macs, a removable hard disk is a good idea, unless you "print" your work by copying it from the computer (using an NTSC encoding board) onto videotape.

The technical limitations of *QuickTime* are real, to be sure. A new version, *QuickTime 1.5*, which will be available by the time you read this, may overcome many of them. No doubt we'll be seeing more adept compression, which means better resolution and bigger pictures. And *QuickTime 1.5* will be able to use Photo CD images, which should greatly speed the development of desktop multimedia production.

QuickTime's release has inspired numerous other companies to create programs that record, edit or otherwise work with the *QuickTime* protocol. Some offer a fascinating glimpse into desktop video's imminent future. Others offer *QuickTime* capability as a side dish to more traditional desktop video prod-

Pick A Card, A Video Card



To make your own *QuickTime* movies, you'll need a video input device—a card that fits into your Macintosh computer and accepts video from a camcorder or a VCR. The following list of cards is a good place to start. The last three will be especially attractive to videographers because they offer NTSC output, which allows you to record computer videos directly onto videotape. They can also genlock, or overlay computer graphics onto motion video images.

- **SuperMac Video Spigot.** The Video Spigot is an inexpensive (\$449) way to get started with *QuickTime*. The card comes bundled with compression software called *Screenplay*, which captures video when you click the mouse on a record button. The footage is then compressed on the fly as it's written to the hard disk.

- **RasterOps 24STV.** Another inexpensive card (\$999) that not only works with *QuickTime* but turns your Macintosh monitor into a video screen. The RasterOps compression software is called *Media Grabber*, and works as simply as a static frame-grabbing device.

- **Truevision NuVista+.** A high-quality digitizing device that includes extensive connection possibilities like RGB and S-video hookups. The NuVista+ captures moving video with any *QuickTime* compression program, such as Apple's *Movie Recorder*, for example.

- **VideoLogic DVA 4000.** Another high-resolution board that lets you display video on a Macintosh screen. When used with VideoLogic's Mediator output/conversion device, the DVA-4000 allows you to record sophisticated multimedia productions on videotape.

- **Radius Videovision.** The mother of all Macintosh input/output devices. Videovision consists of a single digital interface card with video input and output, and a beautifully designed external panel for outboard video and audio connections. Final printing to a finished videotape is totally flicker-free. Its cost is \$2,399.

—RG

Caught in the Act: Radius' Videovision, shown connected (above) to a Macintosh Quadra and a Panasonic VCR, doubles as a *QuickTime* capture card and an outboard connection panel for video, audio and computer components.

ucts. The following four programs lead the way in exploring *QuickTime's* potential for making desktop video more accessible and affordable.

DIVA VIDEOSHOP

VideoShop is a software editing suite for *QuickTime* movies. Priced at \$599,

it's produced by a Massachusetts-based company called DiVa. Its most obvious advantage is non-destructive editing—the ability to change your mind about cuts, transitions and special effects while still retaining the full integrity of both the original and edited footage.

VideoShop works with the familiar

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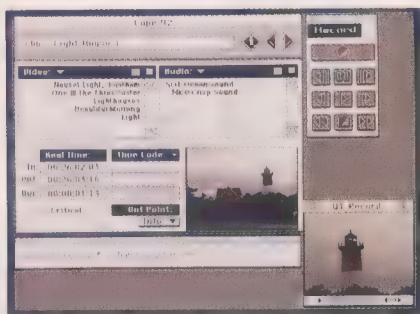
Simulated picture shown.
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COMPUTING

space on your computer.

Just how much depends on the level of video quality you choose. For example, a 12-second movie at "normal" quality might fit on a standard 800-kilobyte floppy disk. "Better" quality takes more space, and "draft" quality uses less. A 30-second movie at full frame and image quality can easily gobble up several megabytes of disk space, so it's easy to see why this first version of *QuickTime* requires a powerful machine with lots of storage capability.

The official Apple requirements for running *QuickTime 1.0* are a color-capable Macintosh with at least two megabytes of RAM (I strongly recommend more) and System 6.07 (or higher) oper-



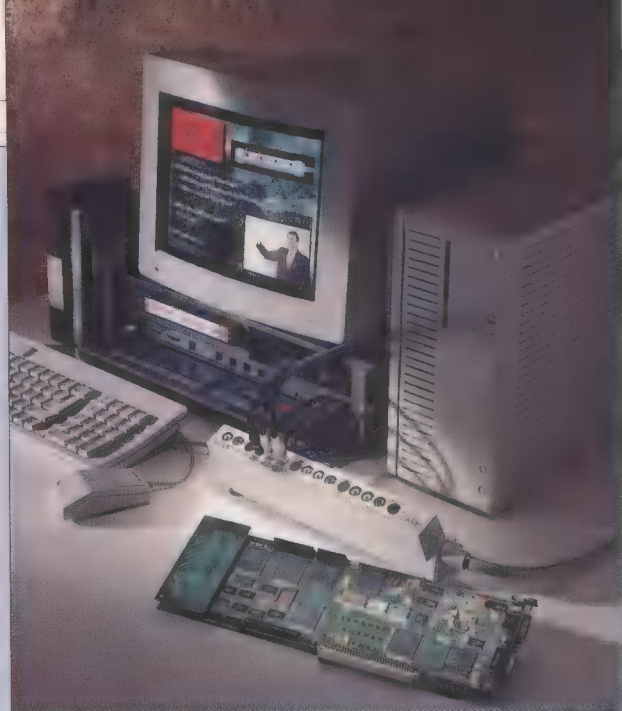
Tool Time: Video Toolkit puts two VCRs under the control of your computer to help you create, edit, list

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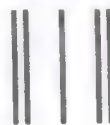
Pick A Card, A Video Card



To make your own *QuickTime* movies, you'll need a video input device—a card that fits into your Macintosh computer and accepts video from a camcorder or a VCR. The following list of cards is a good place to start. The last three will be especially attractive to videographers because they offer NTSC output, which allows you to record computer videos directly onto videotape. They can also genlock, or overlay computer graphics onto motion video images.

- **SuperMac Video Spigot.** The Video Spigot is an inexpensive (\$449) way to get started with *QuickTime*. The card comes bundled with compression software called *Screenplay*, which captures video when you click the mouse on a record button. The footage is then compressed on the fly as it's written to the hard disk.

- **RasterOps 24STV.** Another inexpensive card (\$999) that not only works with *QuickTime* but turns your Macintosh monitor into a video screen. The RasterOps compression software is called *Media Grabber*, and works as simply as a static frame-grabbing device.



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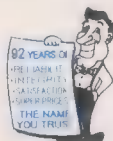
- overemphasizes free merchandise
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BUYERS GUIDE

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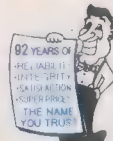
Q. Who is the world's largest camera, electronic and computer department store?



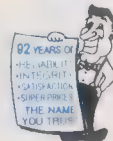
Q. Who has only factory fresh merchandise?
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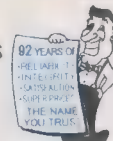
Q. Who has the largest selection of Direct Factory Authorized Brands?



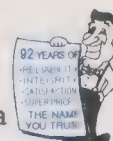
Q. Who can you call for experienced and knowledgeable sales staff?



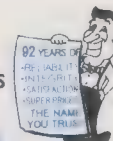
Q. Who guarantees you the lowest purchase price?



Q. Who can you call for prompt and speedy shipment?



Q. Who gives you a 10 day money back guarantee?



Q. They all come and go, but who has been here for 92 years?

ANSWER

TO FIND OUT WHO THIS 92 YEAR OLD RETAIL GIANT IS, TURN TO PAGE 70

Circle 13 on Reader Service Card.

timeline metaphor now popular for computer-based media production. To assemble a video, you import video and audio clips into horizontal timeline tracks and arrange them to your liking. The timeline approach gives you a visual log of all your shots, so you can easily see the flow of your production as you work.

Begin by digitizing your video into the *QuickTime* format, using any of a variety of capture boards (see "Pick a Card, A Video Card"). Once the footage has been compressed and saved, it's represented by what DiVa calls a "micon" — an icon that moves. You edit scenes by dragging their micons into the desired order. This way, movies can be quickly rearranged and edited. By clicking a "magnifying glass" icon on any micon, you open the time (editing) window, where you can trim video footage with standard cut and paste commands.

Because it's based on *Hypercard*, the simple multimedia application that comes with every Macintosh, the logic of *VideoShop* will seem familiar to most Apple users. Beyond this, the program is highly intuitive and thoughtfully laid out. For example, when you want to apply a transition, like a dissolve, between scenes A and B, you simply select the first frame of scene B and drag the cursor to the right. This highlights the end of scene A and the beginning of scene B, and the dissolve occurs over these frames.

Naturally, *VideoShop* isn't perfect — this is, after all, version 1.0. Because there are so many windows you can work with, the screen can get pretty cluttered. Also, there aren't as many effects and transitions as there could be, though the selection here should be ample for all but the wildest presentations. But these are minor complaints about an exemplary product. *VideoShop* is a tantalizing introduction to the possibilities of digital video postproduction.

One caveat — *System 7* (the most recent Macintosh operating system) is crucial to *VideoShop*'s success. While some of the program will work with *System 6.07*, you won't be able to take full advantage of *VideoShop* if you're not running the latest system — and by the time you read this, it will be *System 7.1*.

ADOBE PREMIERE

Adobe Systems ranks among the leaders in digital imaging for the Mac, particularly through a graphics program called *Photoshop*. Adobe *Premiere* is a *QuickTime* editing and presentation package which, like *Photoshop*, offers a mind-boggling selection of special effects and image manipulation capabilities.

A typical *Premiere* session assumes you've already digitized your video footage. The latest version, *Premiere 2.0*, fea-

tures camera control, so you can cue up your videotape and digitize it without leaving the computer screen. From there, an icon for the digitized clip (first frame of video) is placed in the project window, along with other pertinent information, like the clip's duration and resolution. The clip can be motion video, still pictures, sound or graphics.

Once the clip is onscreen, you play it and edit it, picking in and out points. Clips are tagged in SMPTE format — hours, minutes, seconds and frames. Upon gathering and trimming all your clips, you arrange them into what *Premiere* calls a construction. The construction window is where you add effects and superimpositions, which are placed in their own timelines, just like a video or audio clip.

The many transitions provided by Adobe range from the utilitarian to the spectacular, and the abundant palette of digital effects can be applied in varying degrees. *Premiere* documents can also be used to trigger MIDI devices like synthesizers, samplers and sound cards. This capability points to a more integrated, multimedia approach to video production. There's no reason to take up space on the movie file if you can trigger the music from another device that will play along with the movie.

After you've finished editing and arranging scenes, the final project is saved to disk as a movie. The resulting file, like all *QuickTime* movies, can be played on any Macintosh that runs *QuickTime*. With *Premiere 2.0*, priced at \$695, Adobe seems to have made all the necessary improvements to the first version of this software. With a bit of third-party support (primarily for the camera control drivers) for this software, *Premiere* can be a surprisingly complete solution for desktop video production.

VIDEO TOOLKIT

Video Toolkit isn't so much a *QuickTime* product as a traditional desktop editing program that can play scenes out for eventual digitizing. Although this aim may be a bit more modest, *Video Toolkit* more than compensates in execution. This is professional-quality EDL (edit decision list) software that will let you perform a completely automated edit. Priced at \$279, the *Toolkit* was created by Abbate Systems, which is based in Massachusetts.

The package includes cables that tie your two VCRs (or camcorders) to the printer and modem ports of the Mac. Your video gear must support some kind of sync jack. For most non-professionals, this means a LANC (Sony type) or Control M (Panasonic five-pin type) jack. A detailed setup menu tells the computer

continued on page 102



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TAPES & DISCS

N E W R E L E A S E S



Three's a Crowd: Rene Russo alters the usual buddy-movie chemistry of the latest *Lethal Weapon*.

FEATURE FILMS

Lethal Weapon 3

1992. Mel Gibson, Danny Glover, Joe Pesci; dir. Richard Donner. Hi-fi surround. (R) 118 min. \$99.99. LD letterboxed \$29.98. Warner.

They're keepers of the peace who unleash chaos at the drop of a hat. They're kind to animals, but eagerly mow down swarms of bad guys—and never get scratched. Yes, they're zany Martin Riggs (Mel Gibson) and sensible Roger Murtaugh (Danny Glover), back for more comic mayhem in *Lethal Weapon 3*. While the odd couple routine may come too easily to Gibson and Glover

now, their rapport almost makes up for the predictability of the proceedings.

The theme here is illegal firearms, as Riggs and Murtaugh stalk the ruthless ex-cop (Stuart Wilson) pedding automatic weapons to inner-city teens. However, addressing this real-life issue clashes with the shoot-'em-up escapism that defines the *Lethal* films; in fact, Riggs and Murtaugh triumph by firing the very guns they're out to stop. Other contradictions abound as well: Despite subtle messages supporting abortion rights, the anti-fur movement and environmental awareness, the reactionary endorsement of deadly force rages unabated.

After giving *Lethal 2* a jolt as skittish sleaze Leo Getz, Joe Pesci returns for another go-round, only to find little to do.

Playing Riggs' romantic interest, Rene Russo fares better. Her Sergeant Cole is as tough and fearless as he is, offering a refreshing variation on the usual boys'-club antics. She's a must for the next inevitable installment in the *Lethal* series.

—Jon Young

Night on Earth

1992. Winona Ryder, Gena Rowlands, Roberto Benigni; dir. Jim Jarmusch. Hi-fi surround. (R) 128 min. priced for rental. New Line.

Jim Jarmusch, the darling of the American independent cinema, should broaden his audience with the five-part comedy *Night on Earth*, filmed on location in Los Angeles, New York, Paris, Rome and Helsinki. Like his tripartite *Mystery Train*, these stories are linked by a common conceit: Cab drivers and their passengers interact as they drive through the urban darkness.

The cast, while not exactly all-star, will be familiar to arthouse patrons. The first and least successful segment features Gena Rowlands as a high-powered Hollywood agent and Winona Ryder as a grimy female cabbie more interested in becoming a mechanic than a movie star. In Manhattan, Giancarlo Esposito and Rosie Perez (*Do the Right Thing*) make the mistake of getting in a cab driven by recent emigre Armin Mueller-Stahl (*Avalon*), a former clown as unfamiliar with English as he is with a stick shift.



In Paris, driver Isaach De Bankole (*Chocolat*) caps a bad night by picking up Beatrice Dalle (*Betty Blue*), a decidedly unsympathetic blind woman and back-seat driver. The funniest segment is virtually a monologue by Roberto Benigni (*Johnny Stecchino*), who literally talks his passenger to death. The final episode pays homage to Finnish filmmakers Aki and Mika Kaurismäki, featuring some of their repertory troupe as a morose cabbie and three drunken factory workers.

While longtime admirers may feel that Jarmusch is treading water, the brevity of each segment makes his deadpan irony less wearing, as does the change of faces and location every 25 minutes or so. And while Jarmusch ably handles the challenge of such a limited *mise en scene*, the claustrophobic interiors do benefit from the smaller home screen.

—M. Faust

Prelude to a Kiss

1992. Meg Ryan, Alec Baldwin; dir. Norman René. Hi-fi surround. (PG-13) 106 min. \$94.98. LD \$39.98. FoxVideo.

Light as a feather and charming through and through, *Prelude to a Kiss* is either romantic fluff or a metaphysical treatise, depending on your perspective. The story of lovers caught up in fantastic circumstances, this blithe comedy has the entrancing aura of a sweet dream, thanks to appealing stars Alec Baldwin and Meg Ryan. If Craig Lucas' adaptation of his play seems more an extended sketch than a feature film, it's hard to resist all the same.

Peter (Baldwin) is a socially awkward executive for a Chicago medical publisher; Rita (Ryan) is a ditzy bartender, plagued by a fear of the world. When they meet, love blooms, followed by a wedding. After the ceremony, however, Rita and a sickly old man (Sydney



Pucker Up: Fate takes a bizarre turn for Meg Ryan and Alec Baldwin in the ethereal *Prelude to a Kiss*.

Walker) swap bodies—never mind how—leaving poor Peter to sort out the mystery and set matters right.

Without providing answers, Lucas and director Norman René slyly raise intriguing questions about the essence of love. Is it based in the soul? The flesh? Does gender matter? Fortunately, those averse to philosophy can simply enjoy the breezy chemistry between the confused couple. The terminally dashing Baldwin deserves special honors for attempting to impersonate a nerd à la Christopher Reeve's Clark Kent. He doesn't quite succeed, but it's fun to watch him try.

—JY

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

1992. Kristy Swanson, Donald Sutherland, Luke Perry; dir. Fran Rubel Kuzui. Hi-fi stereo, cc. (PG-13) 86 min. \$94.98. LD \$39.98. FoxVideo.

It takes a quirky sense of humor to appreciate *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, the tale of a cheerleader with a keen fashion sense (Kristy Swanson) who is destined to rid her town of vampires (with a little help from Donald Sutherland) and ultimately do battle with their leader (Rutger Hauer). And thanks to comedy that arises from caricature, and not from the typical teen-flick gutter, Fran Rubel Kuzui's directorial debut comes off more like *Heathers* than *Encino Man*.

Half the jokes are in the casting: 90210 dreamboat Luke Perry is a misfit who gets more sneers than sighs, Paul Reubens (once known as Pee-Wee Herman) is a vampire who dies as theatrically as he lives, Ricki Lake (*Hairspray*) pops up as a waitress, and *Studs* host Mark DeCarlo is a basketball coach who wants his players to get in touch with their feelings.

The other half are in the slang: "Toasty" is good, "five minutes ago" is bad. When Buffy fails to give the Senior Dance its due, her friend says, "You're acting like the thing from another tax

EDITOR'S CHOICE

by

kenneth korman

When is a summer blockbuster not really a blockbuster at all? In the case of *Batman Returns*, it's when negative word-of-mouth drops box-office receipts \$100 million below that of the original *Batman* movie. And then there was the much-criticized promotional tie-in with McDonald's enticing kids to this adult-oriented film, despite the concerns of parents.

But home video affords the luxury of 20/20 hindsight. Now that *Batman Returns* is well-preserved on Warner's new laserdisc (\$39.95), we see a flawed movie, but one that entertains with the sheer force of director Tim Burton's vivid imagination. At the close of this strange election year, the movie also seems uniquely prescient: Politics, especially those of the sexual variety, drive this particular *Batmobile*.

Burton's second vision of Gotham City—he also directed the inferior *Batman*—is full of corrupt politicians and civic leaders hell-bent on personal gain at the public's expense. When Danny DeVito's murderous Penguin first emerges from the sewer to become Gotham's next mayoral candidate, he's already talking "family values"—he claims only to want to find his long-lost mom and dad. But he knows how to play the media like the proverbial violin.

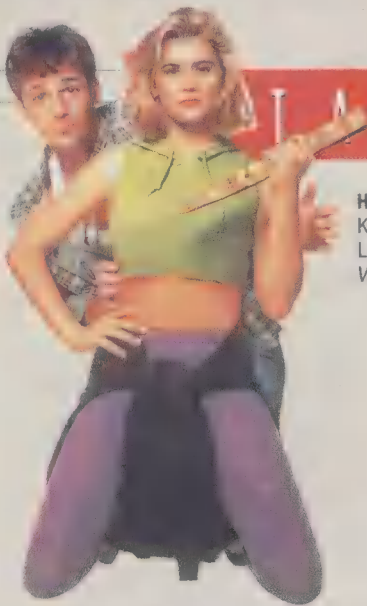
What better symbol could there be for this "year of the woman" in American politics than Michelle Pfeiffer's conflicted, yet fiercely independent Catwoman? It's a sexist perfume ad that first sends her over the brink, destroying her mousy-secretary persona. In a final speech before attempting to bomb Gotham City, the Penguin muses that "the sexes are equal with their erogenous zones blown sky high." A truly bizarre sentiment for a vengeful movie villain, but one which suits this sinister satire like those skin-tight leather duds suit Catwoman.



Batman Returns



Joy Ride: Giancarlo Esposito takes over the wheel from confused cabbie Armin Mueller-Stahl as Rosie Perez looks on in *Night on Earth*.



High Stakes:
Kristy Swanson and
Luke Perry in *Buffy the
Vampire Slayer*.

bracket." But the best line is reserved for our heroine, when she asks the eternal question. "Does the word 'duh' mean anything to you?" You can't help but cheer this girl on to victory.

—April P. Bernard

Edward II

1992. Steven Waddington, Andrew Tiernan; dir. Derek Jarman. Hi-fi surround. (R) 91 min. priced for rental. New Line.

Though it's his most accessible film since 1985's *Caravaggio*, Derek Jarman's relatively straightforward adaptation of *Edward II* is by no means free of idiosyncrasy. Written by Shakespeare contemporary Christopher Marlowe, this 16th-century tragedy is the story of Britain's only openly gay monarch, a man who was driven from power and murdered by a coalition of clerics and nobles headed by his wife.

Jarman's interest in the story is for its continued relevance at a time when public repression of homosexuals is on the rise. So while he retains Marlowe's original dialog, the film is not a period piece. The bare stone sets evoke no particular historical setting, and the prop and costume designs are free-form: Actors appear in military uniforms, gowns or modern sportswear.



No Time Like the Present: *Edward II* straddles disparate eras in its quest for social relevance.

TAPES & DISCS

This style also allows Jarman to punch up the story visually, with romantic touches (Annie Lennox serenades Edward and his lover with a torchy rendition of Cole Porter's "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye"), satire (the queen's bitterness turns her into a vampire) and pointed anachronisms (a battle scene includes demonstrators from Outrage, the British equivalent of ACT-UP).

Only occasionally does Jarman's whimsy seem indulgent. For the most part, these touches illuminate the story and keep it interesting to modern audiences. Traditionalists, of course, will fret, but Jarman has done a fine job of serving both his audience and his material.

—MF

All the Vermeers in New York

1990. Stephen Lack, Emmanuelle Chaulet; dir. Jon Jost. Hi-fi mono, letterboxed. (NR) 87 min. \$89.98. LD \$39.95. World Artists.

For a financial broker named Mark (Stephen Lack), all the Vermeers in New York are an obsession—especially those occupying the tranquil confines of New York's Metropolitan Museum, which offers the perfect antidote to the tense environs of Wall Street. When he encounters a young French actress named Anna (Emmanuelle Chaulet) perusing the Vermeer exhibit, her resemblance to a Vermeer portrait is the catalyst that turns Mark's obsession into something obtainable. As Mark pursues Anna, it becomes clear that their wants and needs—real or imagined—are too volatile to be aligned into a relationship. But *Vermeers* auteur Jon Jost tracks their disjointed progress to its gloomy conclusion.

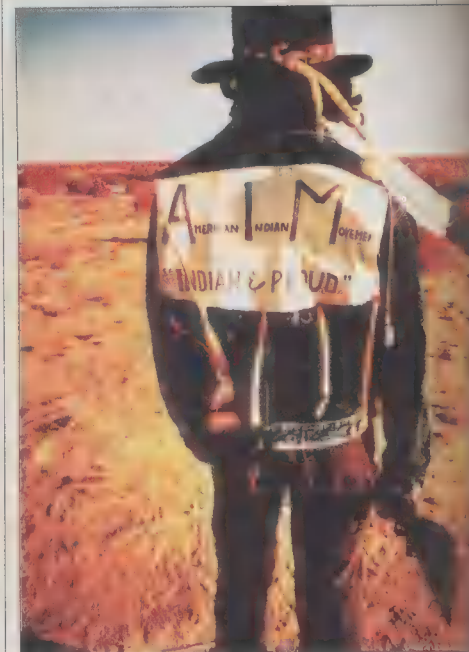
With its improvised dialog and leisurely pacing, *All the Vermeers in New York* could glibly be damned as a literal "art film." But Jost is no New Wave wannabe, having been cited as Jean-Luc Godard's favorite current American director and named the first recipient of the John Cassavetes Award by the Independent Features Project. Suffice to say that Jost's credentials take *All the Vermeers in New York* out of the realm of homage and place it squarely in the same uncompromising territory claimed by his New Wave predecessors.

—John Walker

Incident at Oglala

1992. Nar. Robert Redford; dir. Michael Apted. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG) 90 min. \$89.98. LIVE.

In June of 1975, two FBI agents were shot dead in the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota. A massive manhunt began immediately for members of the American Indian Movement (AIM). One of them, Leonard Peltier,



Justice for All: *Incident at Oglala* focuses on a murder to explore repression of Native Americans.

was eventually convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

According to this sobering documentary, narrated and produced by Robert Redford, the Lakota Sioux at Pine Ridge were engaged in a civil war at the time. The filmmakers contend that the U.S. government, out to break AIM, supplied weapons and training to the forces of tribal leader Richard Wilson (shown declaring "we have our own way of punishing people"). and turned a blind eye. There had been 60 unsolved murders on the reservation in the three years before the hapless agents stumbled into the AIM camp to investigate the theft of a pair of cowboy boots.

Michael Apted applies a sober, steady technique to the mix of interviews, old footage and recreations. Most of the movie is given over to describing

Peltier's trial as a kangaroo court, with suborned witnesses, questionable evidence and the like, but Apted seems ambiguous about Peltier's guilt. The real crime is the general treatment of these "traditional" Native Americans. As one AIM man puts it, "Indians don't like the way they're treated anywhere."

—Sol Louis Siegel

LASERDISCS

Spartacus

1960. Kirk Douglas, Sir Laurence Olivier, Jean Simmons; dir. Stanley Kubrick. Digital stereo, letterboxed, analog-track commentary. (NR) 196 min. plus supplement. Sides 5 & 6 CAV. \$124.95. Criterion.

Over the years, *Spartacus* has lost much of the luster that accompanied its original release. Often dismissed by contemporary audiences as a typical sword-and-sandal potboiler, nothing could be further from the truth, as this lavish Criterion package proves.

As much political allegory as historical epic, *Spartacus* on one level works as a romanticized (and moving) account of a Roman slave rebellion. But screenwriter Dalton Trumbo, who at the time was still blacklisted for alleged communist sympathies, had bigger ideas in mind. The intrigues of the Roman senate, captured beautifully by patrician tyrant-to-be Olivier and plebeian defender Charles Laughton, are a barely veiled critique of McCarthy's reign of terror. It's this backdrop of suspicion, jingoism and megalomania that gives *Spartacus* a richness and intelligence far beyond the conventions of its genre.

Criterion's supplement is outstanding, as usual. It includes profiles of all the major talents (and there were plenty for this picture), reminiscences by Peter Ustinov (who won an Oscar for his performance) and an eerie documentary on the "Hollywood Ten," of which Trumbo was a member. In fact, watching the short before the actual feature gives the film an unsettling resonance.

Great action scenes, bravura camera work and editing by Kubrick, superb ensemble playing by legendary actors, a pristine laser transfer—what else could you want? Alright, so some scenes are outright corny—after all, Kirk Douglas was the real auteur here. But *Spartacus* has always deserved a better fate than



Field of Dreams: Laurence Olivier (right) stands tall in Kubrick's multilayered epic, *Spartacus*.

filler TV programming on election night. If you include just one Hollywood epic in your laser collection, this is the one to get.

—Ron Goldberg

The Busby Berkeley Disc

1992 comp. B&W. Dick Powell, Ruby Keeler, James Cagney, Joan Blondell; various dirs. Digital mono. (NR) 176 min. \$39.98. MGM/UA.

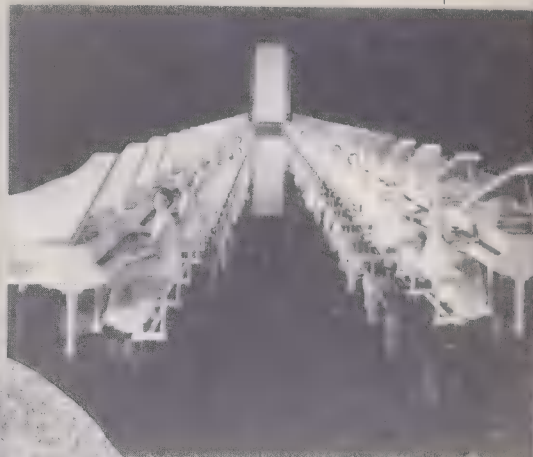
"Are the stars out tonight? I don't know if it's cloudy or bright, 'cause I only have eyes for you." The "you" in this case is *The Busby Berkeley Disc*—I've watched it three times in as many days, and when it's not playing I content myself with whistling its standards ("Shuffle Off to Buffalo," "I Only Have Eyes for You" and "Lullaby of Broadway," to name a few).

This laserdisc-only release is a musical lover's dream, a collection of the innovative dance director's work from 1933-37 at Warner Bros. In films such as *42nd Street*, the *Gold Diggers* series and

Dames, he shocked and thrilled audiences with elaborate production numbers that shattered the fourth wall and defined the Busby Berkeley "look": kaleidoscopic patterns, military precision, beautiful women as calculatedly similar as Ziegfeld girls were unique, repetitious (thus memorable) tunes and unsurpassed originality.

Time has taken some toll, especially in the hiss marring the audio during many *Footlight Parade* entries. And while relics such as Al Jolson's "Goin' to Heaven on a Mule," with blackface chorines dancing with huge watermelon slices, dredge up attitudes better left forgotten, the wartime anthem "Remember My Forgotten Man" would have still carried meaning after Vietnam. Even Madonna could take a lesson in saucy titillation from "Pettin' in the Park." The world of Busby Berkeley is magical, full of fantasy and fun, blonde beauties in feather bikinis and washerwomen dancing with animated long johns—and it's one in which I intend to immerse myself, again and again.

—APB



Gotta Dance: *Gold Diggers* of 1933 (left) and 1935 (above) are among the classic films excerpted on MGM/UA's fabulous *Busby Berkeley Disc*.





Screwball Classic:
Loy and Powell in *I Love You Again*.

Rediscovering Myrna Loy

1992 comp. B&W. *Penthouse* (1933), *The Prizefighter and the Lady* (1933), *Manhattan Melodrama* (1934), *I Love You Again* (1940). Myrna Loy, William Powell, Clark Gable, Warner Baxter, Walter Huston, Max Baer; dir. W.S. Van Dyke. Digital mono. (NR) 379 min. CLV 8 sides. \$99.98. MGM/UA.

In her day, she was dubbed the "perfect wife" and the "queen of Hollywood," but today Myrna Loy is best known as the witty spouse of amateur sleuth William Powell in the ever-engaging *Thin Man* film series of 1934-47. Yet Loy made 60 movies before she ever quipped with Powell—fight pictures, gangster melodramas, screwball comedies, even a turn as Fu Manchu's daughter—and some of that wealth is now available in *Rediscovering Myrna Loy*, a handsome four-film/four-disc set. All the films demonstrate the qualities that brought Loy to the attention of *Thin Man* director W.S. Van Dyke: beauty, brains and a charming no-nonsense style as engaging as it is timeless.

Loy's personality always shines through, no matter how hokey or varied the material. *Rediscovering* is less a collection of the actress' best than a storehouse of historical curiosities: *Penthouse* (1933), a humorless murder "mystery" with Loy in a familiar early role—the lady as a vamp; *The Prizefighter and the Lady* (1933), a sudsy love story, with real-life boxer Max Baer demonstrating he could box better than he could act; *Manhattan Melodrama* (1934), the first of her 13 movies with Powell, a heavy-handed gangster story about two boyhood pals who grow up to be on opposing sides of the law (one is played by Mickey Rooney, who "matures" into Clark Gable!); and *I Love You Again* (1940), the best of the lot, a formulaic

yet charming screwball farce, in which amnesiac Powell woos and wins Loy in some of the wittiest lovemaking of its kind.

Rediscovering Myrna Loy is a tribute to a showbiz legend who was sharp, graceful and intelligent even when the movies were dopey. In a period when many women were considered icons or bubblebrains, that's no small accomplishment.

—Tom Soter

Excalibur

1981. Nigel Terry, Nicol Williamson, Helen Mirren; dir. John Boorman. Digital stereo, letterboxed. (R) 141 min. Side 3 CAV. \$39.95. Warner.

Excalibur is now on its third—and most successful—release on laserdisc. But the very existence of this movie is amazing: When John Boorman set out on his film career with *Catch Us If You Can* (1965), starring the Dave Clark Five, who could have imagined he would one day make a picture grander and more impressive than *Camelot*, *Knights of the Round Table* or *Sword of Lancelot*?

It helps to know something about the Arthurian legends to understand the action in *Excalibur*, but it doesn't take any special background to appreciate its spectacle or beauty. Boorman brings a Wagnerian majesty to his film—an element reinforced by the soundtrack—and backed it up with some great performances (especially Nicol Williamson as Merlin) and a healthy sense of humor. The result is a picture as serious as that

other great Arthurian film—Monty Python and the *Holy Grail*—is silly, and just as entertaining.

The image is crisp, adding weight to the violence of the proceedings, and the mild letterboxing—to an aspect ratio of around 1.85:1—captures some very important camera moves and close-ups. It's all a special pleasure on a big-screen monitor.

—Bruce Eder

The Bad Seed

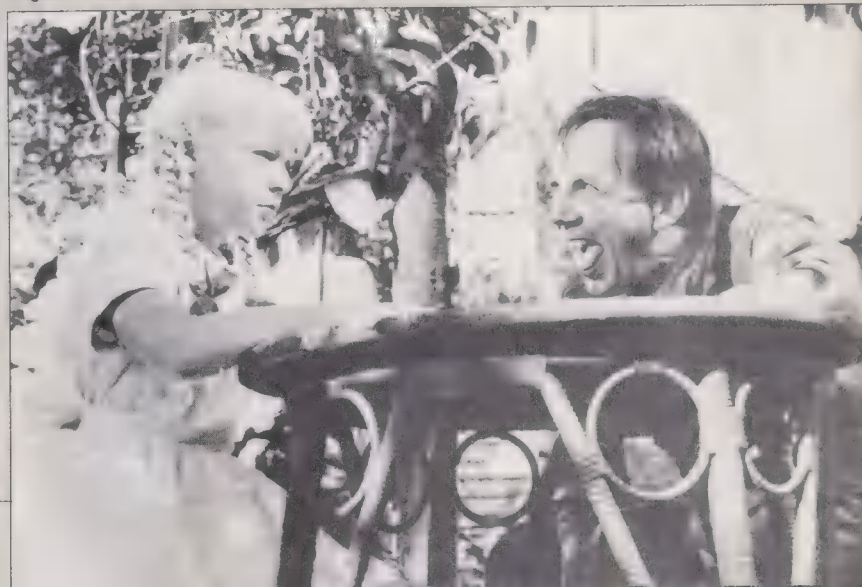
1956. B&W. Nancy Kelly, Patty McCormack, Eileen Heckart; dir. Mervyn LeRoy. Digital mono. (NR) 129 min. Side 3 CAV. \$39.98. Warner.

Rhoda Penmark is a pleasant little girl who performs a perfect curtsy. She wears dresses when other kids wear blue jeans, and she never gets dirty. Oh, what a model child! But little Rhoda (Patty McCormack) has an unpleasant side as well—she has a tendency to kill people.

Based on a Broadway play and a novel by William March, *The Bad Seed* here makes a crisp first appearance on laserdisc. At the core of the story is the debate over genetic versus environmental factors in the creation of a murderer, but this is no dry narrative preaching a sociological theory. It's great fun to watch Daddy's little manipulator alternately seeming cute as a button and mean as a snake, and a more disturbing performance than Patty McCormack's as Rhoda is hard to imagine.

Eileen Heckart is perfect as a grieving mother drowning her sorrows over her drowned little boy, who is found mi-

Angel of Death: Rhoda Penmark (Patty McCormack) spies another potential victim in *The Bad Seed*.



nus his recently won penmanship medal. (Both McCormack and Heckart received Academy Award nominations for their roles, as did Nancy Kelly playing Rhoda's mother.) This is classic melodrama, with an ending that will have you echoing a line from early in the film, delivered by character actor Jess White (later to become the Maytag repairman): "Well I'll be a middle-aged monogloid from Memphis!"

—Brian Clark

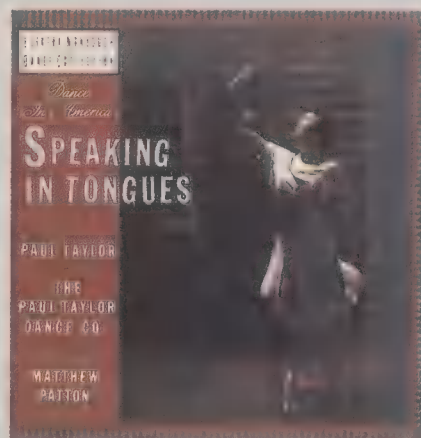
Elektra Nonesuch Dance Collection

"Paris Dances Diaghilev": 1990. The Paris Opera Ballet. 84 min. CLV 2 sides. \$39.98. "Speaking In Tongues": 1991. The Paul Taylor Dance Company. 54 min. CLV 1 side. \$34.98. "The Catherine Wheel": 1982. Twyla Tharp Dance Foundation. 88 min. CLV 2 sides. \$39.98. Each digital stereo. Elektra Nonesuch.

Despite the better efforts of a few dedicated labels, dance videos haven't attracted much of a following in the U.S. Perhaps this is due to the stuffy ambience usually associated with them—you can almost hear the requisite patrician voice urging well-mannered appreciation for yet another *Nutcracker* or *Sleeping Beauty*. These three discs from Elektra Nonesuch's new Dance Collection are a refreshing departure, in both presentation and program material.

Paris Dances Diaghilev is a tribute to the mastermind behind the original Ballet Russes, a troupe whose innovations still resonate some 60 years after its heyday. Danced by members of the Paris Opera Ballet, this collection of pieces by Stravinsky, Weber and Debussy is an excellent introduction to the foundations of modern dance. Paul Taylor's dreamlike *Speaking in Tongues* is a series of reminiscences by an elderly "preacher-man," as he ambivalently reflects on a life filled with longing, guilt and possibly redemption. *The Catherine Wheel* is a quirky collaboration between Twyla Tharp and David Byrne, juxtaposing the inanities of modern life against the spiritual asceticism of the 4th-century martyr St. Catherine.

Unlike too many dance presentations, each of these discs is wonderfully kinetic, with adroit camerawork and editing that keeps the feeling of motion intact, even on video. Unfortunately, only the *Diaghilev* includes any kind of



liner notes—*The Catherine Wheel* features a short documentary on Tharp and *Speaking in Tongues* offers no playbill at all. Minor oversights like these aside, Nonesuch deserves applause. These discs are the next best thing to being there.

—Ron Goldberg

The Horse Soldiers

1959. John Wayne, William Holden, Constance Towers; dir. John Ford. Digital mono, letterboxed. (NR) 119 min. Side 3 CAV. \$39.95. MGM/UA.

The Horse Soldiers might have been one of John Ford's finest films. It has all the necessary ingredients—a rousing, epic story, based on an actual Union Army raid deep into Confederate territory during the Civil War, and two very solid leads in John Wayne and William Holden. The accidental death of a stuntman in a fall from a horse, however, muted Ford's handling of the picture, and its repeated television showings haven't helped the movie's reputation.

This laserdisc goes a long way to rehabilitating *The Horse Soldiers*. Overlooking the gratuitous letterboxing—this is a non-anamorphic movie, and the matting only cuts out picture area—the depth of color and detail is overpowering. The sound is a special delight, not merely for the vivid explosions and gunfire, but also for David Buttolph's rousing arrangements of marching songs from both sides.

Compared to Ford's other films, *The Horse Soldiers* is curiously mature and somber. It's virtually devoid of heroes, except perhaps for the anonymous soldiers who sing and die for causes they scarcely understand. In that regard, it anticipates Ford's segment in *How the West Was Won*. Wayne's hard-nosed commander is especially unattractive,

driven by destructive personal demons, and Holden's glib, cynical army doctor is one of the best friendly antagonists Wayne ever had.

—BE

SPECIAL INTEREST

I'm From Hollywood

1992. Andy Kaufman, Robin Williams, Tony Danza, Marilu Henner; dirs. Lynne Margulies, Joe Orr. Hi-fi stereo. 60 min. \$24.98. Shanachie.

If some comedians are put-down artists, Andy Kaufman was a put-on artist. Best remembered as the gibberish-speaking, vaguely Eastern-European mechanic on the sitcom *Taxi*, Kaufman, who died in 1984, was at heart a performance artist who wouldn't or didn't know when to quit. As this odd and poignant documentary about his wrestling side-career makes plain, Kaufman went to incredible lengths to see how far he could take us.

A longtime fan of professional wrestling—itsself well-choreographed performance art—Kaufman held countless bouts with amateur women wrestlers, and had an ongoing feud with Southern champion Jerry "The King" Lawler, who bloodied him and put him in the hospital. How much of this was a put-on, no one knows: Fellow *Taxi* star Tony Danza says in an apparently new interview, "You just didn't know with Andy. You were never sure." Even Robin Williams is uncharacteristically subdued describing a friend on the edge between brilliance and, perhaps, genuine insanity.

Amateurishly shot but remarkably compelling, this documentary integrates interviews, performance footage and rare local-TV coverage of Kaufman's bouts in South Carolina and Memphis, Tennessee. Except for one interview where he speaks in his normal voice, Kaufman never breaks character, playing out middle America's worst stereotype of the obnoxious Hollywood jerk. But after watching Kaufman rant about sending women "back to the kitchen where they belong" and offering Southerners straight-faced instructions on how to use soap, it's fairly clear he's putting us on. "We use soap," one man snorts, taking Kaufman completely seriously. That the man actually took him that way seems Andy's vindication.

—Frank Lovece

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

American Dream

1991. Look for the union label: Last year's Best Documentary Feature, according to Oscar, tracks the progress of striking meat-packers in Minnesota. Hi-fi surround, cc. (NR) 100 min. VHS \$89.99. LD \$34.95. HBO.

Boomerang

1992. Eddie Murphy, Robin Givens, Halle Berry; dir. Reginald Hudlin. Eddie's foray into "sensitive man" territory. Hi-fi stereo, cc. (R) 118 min. VHS, Beta priced for rental. Paramount.

The Elegant Criminal

1992. Daniel Auteuil; dir. Francis Girod. Accomplished actor from *Jean de Florette* and *Manon of the Spring* as one of France's most notorious—and fascinating—murderers. Mono, subtitled. (NR) 120 min. VHS only, \$89.95. Fox Lorber.



Va-Va-Voom:

Mae West's vamping—shown to full advantage on the new laserdisc of *She Done Him Wrong*—helped pull Paramount from near-bankruptcy.

Labels For Less

Start the new year right—with a sweet transvestite from transsexual Transylvania. FoxVideo's cultish midnight movie *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* is now ownable at \$19.98. Other strange creatures appear in the studio's newly letterboxed *Star Wars* videocassette trilogy. It boxes up Luke Skywalker, Darth Vader, Princess Leia, Han Solo and all the other intergalactic adventurers in the original, *The Empire Strikes Back*, *Return of the Jedi* plus a documentary for \$99.98.

Catalogs to consider: Alternative Videos (837 Exposition Avenue, Dallas, TX 75226; 214-823-6030) specializes in black videos, and rents tapes by mail. Or try *The "No Movies" Video Catalog: Sports/Fitness, How-To & Instructional Videos* for free (61 East 8 Street, Suite 335, New York, NY 10003; 212-989-3749). More special-interest titles appear in *M-vcr: The Music Video Catalog & Magazine*, \$19.95 for a one-year subscription (Box 5207, East Orange, NJ 07017; 201-673-1084).

Repriced "Columbia Classics" laserdiscs from Pioneer keep coming, with *Anatomy of a Murder* now \$29.95, and at \$24.95, *Casino Royale*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*, *Kramer vs. Kramer*, *Guns of Navarone* and more....Seven PM action-adventure flicks, such as *Traci Lords in A Time to Die*, now priced at \$29.95 each....For more highbrow entertainment, Paramount's *Bel Canto* series of opera, ballet and symphonic music tapes is now available for \$22.95 to \$29.95....

BBC classics for \$19.98 from CBS/Fox include *All Creatures Great and Small* and three of Agatha Christie's "Miss Marple" whodunits....*Space Music* and *The Wonderful Planet* from BMG are even more breathtaking at \$19.98 each....Three Kino photography films (from Susan Meiselas, Paul Strand and Bruce Weber) and *Connoisseur's* portrait of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo have been repriced to \$29.95 each.

—APB

The Godfather Trilogy

1992 comp. Marlon Brando, Robert De Niro, Al Pacino; dir. Francis Ford Coppola. Talk about deluxe: Leather-bound set includes three great films woven into one by Coppola, plus documentary and booklet. Hi-fi surround, cc. (R) 583 min. plus supplement. VHS, LD \$199.95. Paramount.

Hold Your Man

1933. B&W. Jean Harlow, Clark Gable; dir. Sam Wood. All about Ruby and Eddie, a couple o' con artists sweet on each other. Hi-fi mono. (NR) 87 min. VHS, Beta \$19.98. MGM/UA.

Honey, I Blew Up the Kid

1992. Rick Moranis, Lloyd Bridges, Marcia Strassman; dir. Randal Kleiser. Another "oops" from scatterbrained scientist Wayne Szalinski. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG) 89 min. VHS, Beta \$94.95. Walt Disney.

Kafka

1991. B&W/color. Jeremy Irons, Theresa Russell, Joel Grey; dir. Steven Soderbergh. First-class, unconventional director (of *sex, lies, and videotape*) and actor (Irons) combine talents in a thriller for curiosity-seekers. Hi-fi stereo, cc. (PG-13) 100 min. VHS, Beta priced for rental. Paramount.

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She Done Him Wrong

1933. B&W. Mae West, Cary Grant; dir.

continued on page 88

Compiled by April P. Bernard



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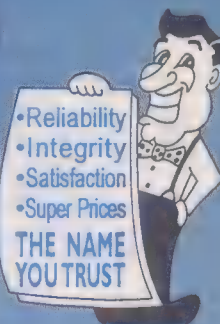
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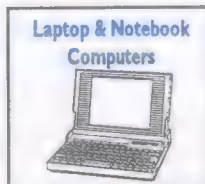
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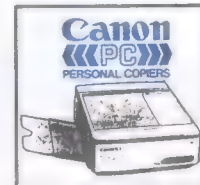
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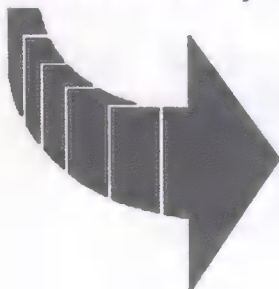


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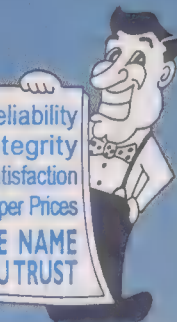
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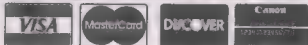
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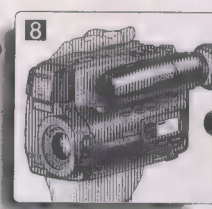
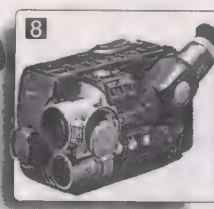
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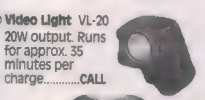
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E250 12x Zoom w/ h-case Call
E55 10x Zoom w/ h-case Call
UC1 ULTRA-Compact New! Call
UC20 10x Zoom Call
UCS1 Hi-Band Call
UCS2 12x Zoom Call
UCS3 Hi-Band Call
L1 Digital 10x Zoom, HI-8 Call
Top of the Line

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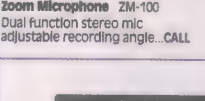
Charges and refreshes up to four
Canon battery packs. CALL



20W output. Runs for approx. 35
minutes per charge. CALL



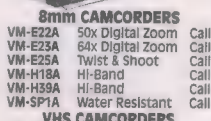
RS-U1: Lets you keep shooting in
light rain or mist. Protects your
camera from moisture. CALL



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lighting situations. 37, 46, 55mm
Available. CALL



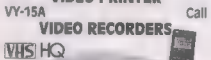
Dual function stereo mic
adjustable recording angle. CALL



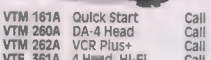
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VM-E22A 50x Digital Zoom Call
VM-E23A 64x Digital Zoom Call
VM-E25A Twist & Shoot Call
VM-H18A Hi-Band Call
VM-H38A Hi-Band Call
VM-SP1A Water Resistant Call



VHS CAMCORDERS
VM-2500A 16x Digital Zoom Call
VM-4400A 64x Digital Zoom Call
VM-5400A 100x Digital Zoom Call
VM-S8200A Super VHS Call



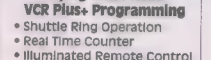
VIDEO PRINTER
VY-15A Call



VIDEO RECORDERS
VTM-161A Quick Start Call
VTM-260A DA-4 Head Call
VTM-262A VCR Plus+ Call
VTF-361A 4 Head, HI-FI Call
VTF-362A VCR Plus+ Call
VTF-462A SX-5 Head Call
VTF-551A SX-5 Head Call
VTS-751A Super VHS Call



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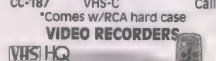
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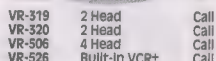
8mm CAMCORDERS
Pro 865 8x Zoom Call
Pro 867 11x Zoom Call
Pro 870 HI-FI Stereo Call
Pro 880HB HI-Band Call
RCA 8mm Hard Case Call
RCA 2 hr. battery (BB120) Call



VHS CAMCORDERS
CC-407 1 Lux Call
CC-507 16x Zoom Call
CC-517 20x Zoom Call
CC-187 VHS-C Call



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VIDEO RECORDERS
VHS HQ



VR-319 2 Head Call
VR-320 2 Head Call
VR-506 4 Head Call
VR-526 Built-in VCR+ Call
VR-536 Front Panel A/V Call
VR-657HF HI-FI, 4 head Call
VR-667HF VCR+ Call



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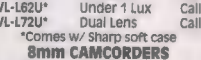
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VV-1215 13" Call
VV-1220 20" Call For Price



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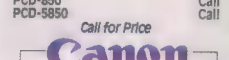


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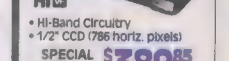
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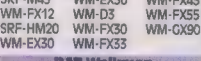


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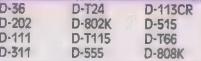
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SRF-M43 WM-EX50 WM-FX43
WM-FX12 WM-D3 WM-FX55
SRF-HM20 WM-FX30 WM-CX90
WM-EX30 WM-FX33



DAT Walkman
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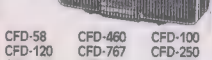
Discman
D-36 D-724 D-113CR
D-202 D-802K D-515
D-111 D-1115 D-T66
D-311 D-555 D-808K



World Band Radio
ICF-SW20 ICF-SW77 ICF-SW55
ICF-SW800 ICF-7601 ICRF-V21
ICF-SW7600 ICF-7700
ICF-2010 ICF-SW45



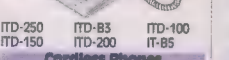
CD Cassette Recorders
CFD-58 CFD-460 CFD-100
CFD-120 CFD-767 CFD-250
CFD-260 CFD-30 CFD-703



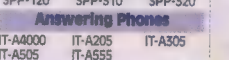
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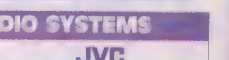
Feature Phones
ITD-250 ITD-83 ITD-100
ITD-150 ITD-200 IT-85



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SPP-A40 SPP-170 SPP-115
SPP-95 SPP-190 SPP-160
SPP-D15 SPP-85 SPP-180
SPP-120 SPP-S10 SPP-320



Answering Phones
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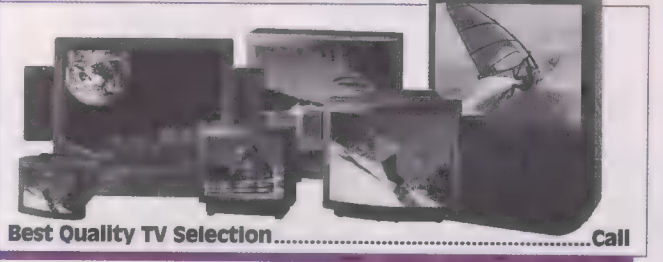
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MX-55 6 CD Changer Call
MX-44 CD Player Call
UX-A3 Micro Sys. New! Call
UX-A5 Micro Sys. New! Call



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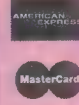
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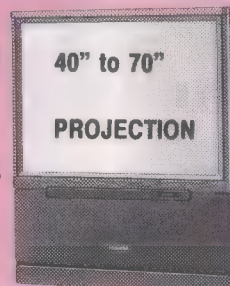
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PRO 820 825 CALL
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E-65, E-67 CALL
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GRAX 10 U CALL
GRM 3 U NEW
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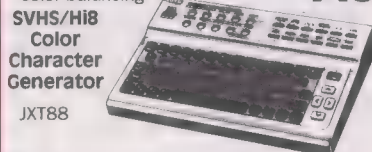


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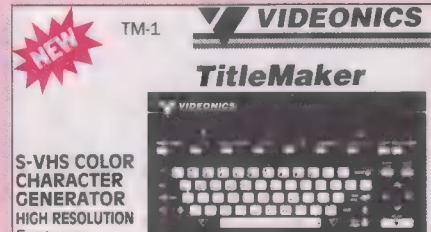
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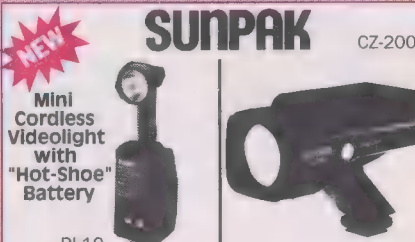
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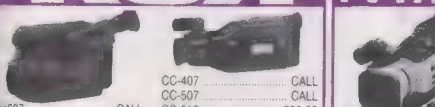
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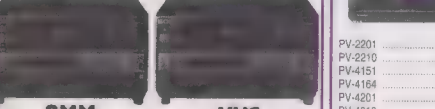
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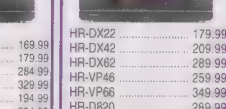
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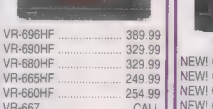
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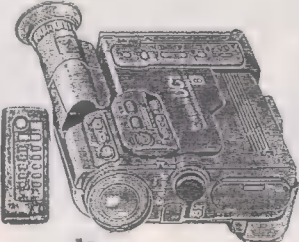
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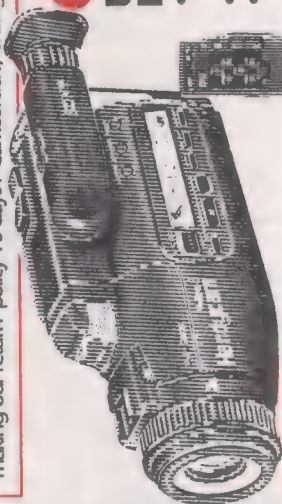


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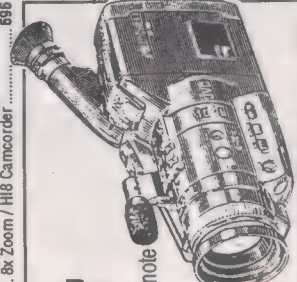


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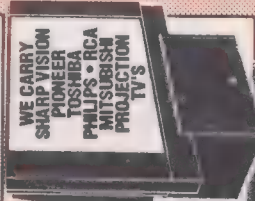
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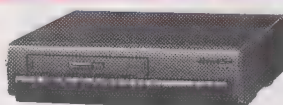
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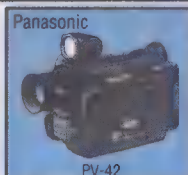
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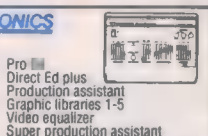
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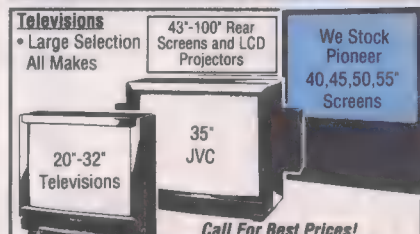
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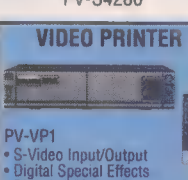
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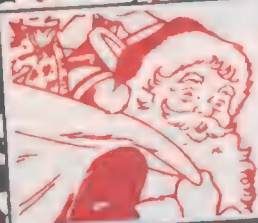
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continued from page 66

Lowell Sherman. Why don't you come up and see it sometime. Digital mono. (NR) 65 min. LD \$34.98. MCA/Universal.

Mary Poppins

1964. Some anim. Julie Andrews, Dick Van Dyke; dir. Robert Stevenson. Julie Andrews makes her film debut as a newfangled nanny with more than a few tricks up her sleeve, now on a special collector's edition disc with storyboards, premiere footage and other extras. Digital stereo, letterboxed. (NR) 140 min. LD \$69.99. Image Entertainment.

Modern Times

1936. B&W. Charlie Chaplin, Paulette Goddard; dir. Chaplin. First of 10 newly transferred, refurbished entries in the "Chaplin: A Legacy of Laughter" laserdisc collection features daily production logs for one sequence, plus an interview with David Raksin, who collaborated with Chaplin on the score. Next up: *City Lights*, *The Great Dictator* and *Monsieur Verdoux*. Digital mono. (NR) 89 min. CAV 3 sides. \$69.98. CBS/Fox.

Monty Python and the Holy Grail

1975. Terry Jones, Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Michael Palin; dirs. Gilliam, Jones. Extras on this cult comedy: commentary from the co-directors, deleted scene, trailer, production images and—of all things—a dubbed Japanese soundtrack. Digital stereo, letterboxed. (PG) 90 min. LD \$49.95. Criterion.

The Naked City

1948. B&W. Barry Fitzgerald, Howard Duff; dir. Jules Dassin. Four-star film noir: "There are eight million stories in the naked city. This has been one of them." From the director of the original *Night and the City*. Mono. (NR) 96 min. VHS only, \$69.95. Ivy Classics (704-333-3991).

Poison Ivy

1992. Drew Barrymore, Sara Gilbert, Tom Skerritt; dir. Katt Shea Ruben. Billed as "steamy" and "erotic," it's really deliciously sleazy. Hi-fi surround, cc. (R, unrated versions) 91-95 min. VHS only, priced for rental. New Line.

SS-3: The Assassination of Reinhard Heydrich

1992 comp. B&W/color. Spellbinding account of the plot to rid the world of Hitler's right-hand man, with actual footage of Heydrich's 1942 funeral. Hi-fi mono. 56 min. VHS, Beta \$29.95. International Historic Films (312-927-2900).

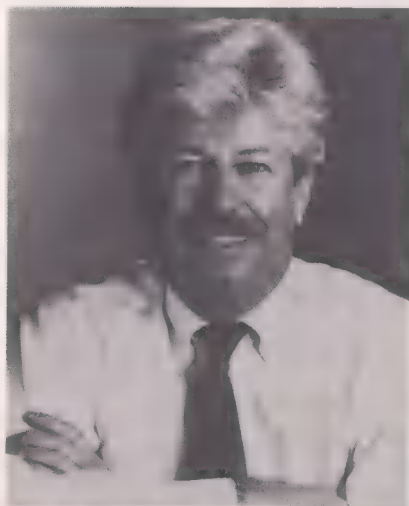
A Stranger Among Us

1992. Melanie Griffith, Eric Thal; dir. Sidney Lumet. Hardened New York cop goes undercover in Hasidic community. Hi-fi surround, cc. (PG-13) 109 min. VHS, Beta \$94.95. LD \$39.99. Hollywood Pictures.

Television Toys

1992 comp. B&W/color. Nearly 100 plugs for Barbie's Mix and Match Clothes, Witch Doctor Head Shrinker's Kit, the Secret Sam Spy Set, Silly Putty and the like. Digital mono. 108 min. LD \$49.95. Voyager.

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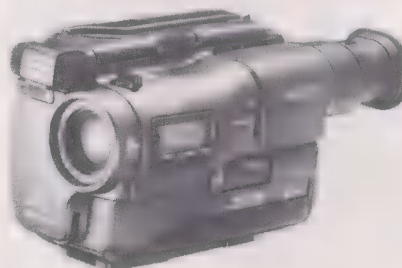


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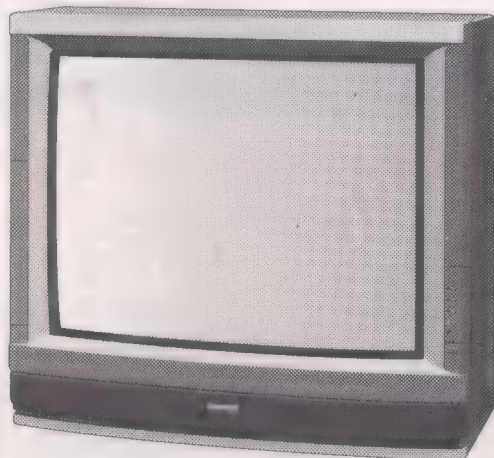
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\$968

Above Camcorders are made by Sony. Lens, prices & warranties Vary by brand

YOUR CHOICE

- **SONY** CCD-TR81
- **RICOH R-88**
- **YASHICA KDH**



8MM!

SPECIFICATIONS

- 8X Zoom
- Wireless Remote
- Hi-8
- 470 Lines Resolution
- 1/10,000 Shutter Speed
- Hi-Fi Stereo

CALL

- **SONY CCD-TR71**
- **RICOH R-15**
- **YASHICA KX95**
- **NIKON VN-320**

SONY CCD-TR71 \$618

Above Camcorders are made by Sony. Lens, prices & warranties Vary by brand

Canon

UCS-1

Canon Quality



SPECIFICATIONS

- Hi-8
- Hi-Fi Stereo
- Wireless Remote
- Canon Optics
- 7 Mode AE

\$848

UCS-2.....CALL
UCS-3.....CALL

UC-1

SPECIFICATIONS

- 8X Zoom
- 2 Lux
- Slim Design

\$548

UC-20..\$628 **E-250..CALL**
UC-30..CALL **E-67..CALL**

SONY

CCD-FX510



8MM!

SPECIFICATIONS:

- 10X Zoom
- 3-Lux
- AE Program
- Hi-Fi Stereo
- 10,000 Shutter Speed

\$648

CCD FX410 \$598

CCD-FX710



8MM!

SPECIFICATIONS

- Hi-8
- 10X Zoom
- Variable Shutter
- Program-AE
- Superimpose
- Hi-Fi Stereo
- Remote

CALL

CCDV-701.....CALL
CCDV-801.....CALL
CCDV-5000.....\$1688
CCDV-6000.....CALL

MINOLTA

MASTER 8-848



SPECIFICATIONS:

- 64X Zoom
- Auto Exposure
- Digital AF
- Titlisa
- 4 Heads
- Hi-Band 8mm
- EIS Stabilizer
- Digital Signal

PRO 8-918

MAXXUM OPTICS!



NEW!

SPECIFICATIONS:

- 2 CCD Chip
- Hi-8
- Hi-Fi Stereo
- Pro Line

AVAILABLE

MINOLTA 8-428.....CALL
MINOLTA 8-438.....CALL
MINOLTA C-618.....CALL

RCA

CC-560 PRO EDIT



SPECIFICATIONS:

- S-VHS
- Pro Ed
- 4 Page Tinting
- Gain
- Variable Shutter

CALL

CC-525.....\$748
PRO-865.....\$648
CC-180.....CALL

JVC

GRAX-10



VHS-C!

SPECIFICATIONS:


- Super Compact
- VHS-C
- 4 Lux
- 8X Zoom

\$548

GRSX-90.....\$798
GRAX-50U.....CALL
GRM-3U, 5U, 7U.....CALL

Panasonic

PV-42 VHS-C



VHS-C!

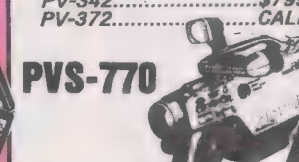
SPECIFICATIONS

- VHS-C
- EIS
- Digital
- 8X Zoom

\$778

PVS-62.....CALL
PV-342.....\$799
PV-372.....CALL

PVS-770




SPECIFICATIONS:

- S-VHS
- 12X Zoom
- Switch Hitter
- Digital

CALL

PV-760.....CALL
PV-750.....CALL
AG-450.....CALL

A-1 DIGITAL



Hi 8MM!

SPECIFICATIONS

- Hi-Band Stereo
- Remote
- TTL Focus
- 10X Zoom

\$1188

H-850.....\$798
L1.....\$1688

YOUR CHOICE

- **RCA** PRO-880
- **MINOLTA 8-808**
- **HITACHI VM18A**

SPECIFICATIONS:

- 8X Zoom w/Macro
- 4 Mode
- Program Ae
- 3 Lux
- Hi-8
- Character Generator
- Infrared Focus
- 10,000 Shutter Speed

RCA PRO-880 \$748



RCA PRO-820



SPECIFICATIONS:

- 8X Zoom w/Macro
- 4 Mode
- Program Ae
- 3 Lux
- Character Generator
- Infrared Focus
- 10,000 Shutter Speed

CALL

PV-760.....CALL
PV-750.....CALL
AG-450.....CALL

RCA PRO-820 \$578

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- Hi-Fi stereo
- Palm-size
- Hi-Band



BEST PRICE

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- Lux low-light
- Hi-Fi stereo
- Palm-size
- Hi-Band



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- Hi-Band,
- 8mm
- AFM Hi-Fi's
- Opt. EOS Adaptr
- 2x Closeup,
- Freeze



SALE

HITACHI VM39A

- Digital zoom
- EIS, Hi-Band
- Hi-Fi stereo
- Color View Finder
- Loaded



CALL

CANON UCS1

- 10x zoom
- Hi-Band
- Hi-Fi stereo
- Remote
- Built-in stabilizer



CLOSE OUT

CANON UCS2

- 8x zoom
- Hi-Band
- Hi-Fi stereo
- Remote
- Built-in stabilizer



CALL

MINOLTA 8-918

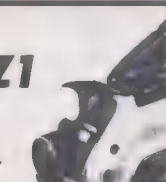
- 2 CCD Chip
- Low Lux
- Hi-Band
- Remote



SALE

JVC GRSZ1

- Remote
- Digital
- Palm Size
- Super VHSC



BEST PRICE

HITACHI VME5400

- 100X Zoom
- Full Size VHS
- Digital Imposer



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SHARP VLL62U

- Slimcam
- Compact
- Light-weight
- Fully Automatic



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SHARP VLMX7U

- 12x zoom
- Remote
- Hi-Fi stereo
- Color Viewfinder
- Digital
- VLMX10 SNEW



CALL

JVC GRM5U

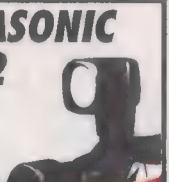
- 8x Power zoom
- VHSC
- Video Light
- Low Lux
- Color View Finder



BEST PRICE

PANASONIC PV42

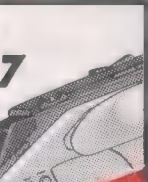
- 20x zoom
- Low Lux
- VHSC
- Color Fade
- Digital Stabilizer



SALE

RCA PRO807

- 8x zoom
- Infrared
- Autofocus
- Top Rated



CALL

YASHICA KX95

- 10x zoom
- 3 Lux low-light
- Hi-Fi stereo
- Palm-size
- Yashica Optics



BEST PRICE

JVC GRAX10U

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- VHSC
- Video Light
- Low Lux
- Color View Finder



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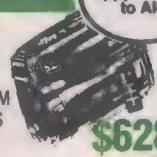


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TR101 \$988 TR-81 \$788
TR-9 \$548

TR-71

- HI-FI
- 10x1 ZOOM
- WIRELESS REMOTE



\$628

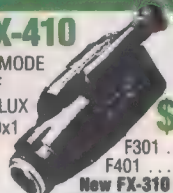
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TR-51 \$548
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to All.

SONY

FX-410

- 3 MODE AF
- 2 LUX
- 10x1



\$608

F301 \$488
F401 \$528
New FX-310 CALL
FX-710 CALL

FX-SERIES FX-510

- 10x1
- HI-FI STEREO
- 3 MODE AF



\$688

F501 \$828
V701 \$788
V810 CALL

Nikon

NEW VN-720

- HI-8
- 8x1
- EIS
- SAME AS TR-200
- Nikon Optics



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5 YR. WARRANTY

YASHICA

New KXHVI

- HI-FI
- 10x1 ZOOM
- WIRELESS REMOTE
- HI-8



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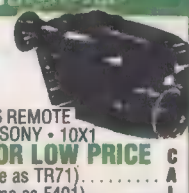
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- EIS
- COLOR DIGITAL
- 1 LUX



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PV-22

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- 1 LUX

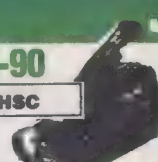


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PV-18 \$618
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PV-S372 CALL

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- S-VHSC
- SVHS-C
- HI-FI
- 8x1 ZOOM
- WIRELESS REMOTE



\$808

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JVC

GRAX-10

- VHS-C
- 8x1 ZOOM
- VIDEO LIGHT



\$568

GRAX-2 \$458
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Panasonic

PVS-770

- S-VHS
- 12x1
- DIGITAL FADE
- VIDEO LIGHT



\$968

PV-760 \$960
PV-710 \$569

PV-704

- 8x1 • 2 LUX
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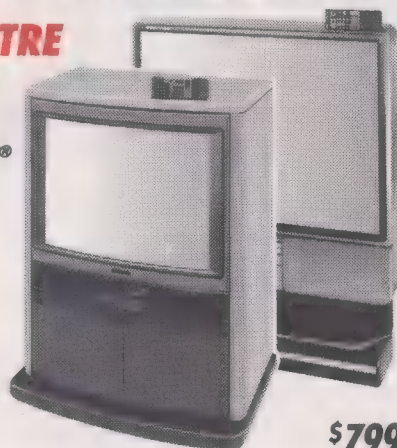
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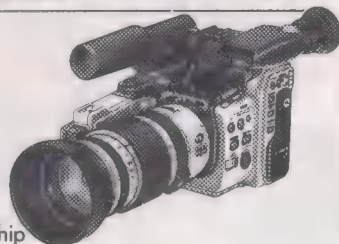
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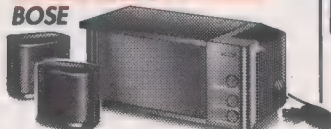


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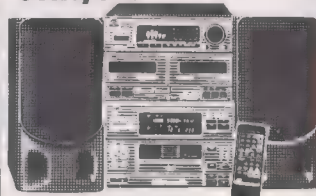
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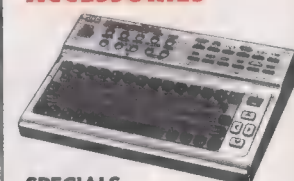
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CCD-TR81	799.99
CCD-TR71	619.99
CCD-TR51	509.99
CCD-TR31	589.99
CCD-TR9	544.99
CCD-TR7	599.99
CCD-TR6	529.99
CCD-FX710	819.99
CCD-FX510	649.99
CCD-FX410	599.99
CCD-FX310	544.99
CCD-V801	844.99
CCD-V701	789.99
CCD-F501	609.99
CCD-F401	519.99
CCD-F301	449.99
CCD-F201	449.99
CCD-F77	599.99
CCD-V5000	1799.99

SONY VCR's



SLV-393	264.99
SLV-595HF	369.99
SLV-695HF	369.99

Panasonic CAMCORDERS



PV-700	489.99	PV-14	579.99
PV-704	484.99	PV-18	509.99
PV-710	569.99	PV-22	624.99
PV-720	629.99	PV-32	739.99
PV-750	719.99	PV-42	799.99
PV-780	869.99	PV-562	1019.99
PV-5770	974.99	PV-332	889.99
PV-645	849.99	PV-362	849.99
PV-19	489.99	PV-S372	1069.99
PV-21	529.99	AG-450	1139.99
PV-41	719.99	AG-460	2749.99

Panasonic VCR's



Panasonic		\$289⁹⁹	
PV-4260			
PV-2201	*169.99	PV-4262	*364.99
PV-2210	179.99	PV-4264	*429.99
PV-4261	104.99	PV-4265	444.99

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HR-DX62	289.99
HR-D910	309.99
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HR-VP66	349.99
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HR-D990	CALL!
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GR-AX5	499.99
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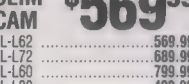
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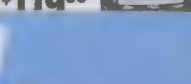
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VIDEO Reader Service Card

VIDEO Reader Service Card

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone Number (with Area Code) _____

1. Which of the following do you currently own?
Center Channel Speakers ☐ A ☐ Surround Sound Speakers ☐ C
Sub-Woofer ☐ B ☐ Satellite Sub-Woofer Speaker System ☐ D

2. Which of the following do you intend to purchase?
Center Channel Speakers ☐ E ☐ Surround Sound Speakers ☐ G
Sub-Woofer ☐ F ☐ Satellite Sub-Woofer Speaker System ☐ H

3. How much money do you intend to spend on the above products?
Up to \$500 ☐ I ☐ \$1,500 - \$2,499 ☐ L
\$500 - \$999 ☐ J ☐ \$2,500 - \$4,999 ☐ M
\$1,000 - \$1,499 ☐ K ☐ \$5,000 or more ☐ N

4. When do you intend to make your purchases?
Within the next 30 days ☐ O ☐ Within the next 120 days ☐ R
Within the next 60 days ☐ P ☐ Within the next year ☐ S
Within the next 90 days ☐ Q ☐

5. Are you currently a subscriber to VIDEO? ☐ T Yes ☐ U No

Please circle product numbers to receive desired information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

Allow 6-8 weeks for delivery. Card expires 4/19/93. RS193

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone Number (with Area Code) _____

1. Which of the following do you currently own?
Center Channel Speakers ☐ A ☐ Surround Sound Speakers ☐ C
Sub-Woofer ☐ B ☐ Satellite Sub-Woofer Speaker System ☐ D

2. Which of the following do you intend to purchase?
Center Channel Speakers ☐ E ☐ Surround Sound Speakers ☐ G
Sub-Woofer ☐ F ☐ Satellite Sub-Woofer Speaker System ☐ H

3. How much money do you intend to spend on the above products?
Up to \$500 ☐ I ☐ \$1,500 - \$2,499 ☐ L
\$500 - \$999 ☐ J ☐ \$2,500 - \$4,999 ☐ M
\$1,000 - \$1,499 ☐ K ☐ \$5,000 or more ☐ N

4. When do you intend to make your purchases?
Within the next 30 days ☐ O ☐ Within the next 120 days ☐ R
Within the next 60 days ☐ P ☐ Within the next year ☐ S
Within the next 90 days ☐ Q ☐

5. Are you currently a subscriber to VIDEO? ☐ T Yes ☐ U No

Please circle product numbers to receive desired information

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

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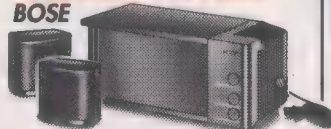


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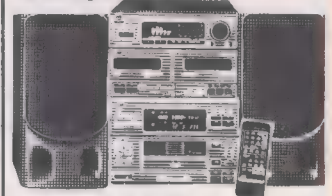
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CCD-TR71	619.99
CCD-TR51	509.99
CCD-TR31	544.99
CCD-TR9	544.99
CCD-TR7	599.99
CCD-TR6	529.99
CCD-FX710	819.99
CCD-FX510	649.99
CCD-FX410	599.99
CCD-FX310	544.99
CCD-V801	844.99
CCD-V701	789.99
CCD-F501	609.99
CCD-F401	519.99
CCD-F301	449.99
CCD-F201	449.99
CCD-F11	599.99
CCD-V5000	1799.99

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SLV-696HF	399.99
SLV-R5	759.99

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EV-A50	374.99
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TC-WR570	129.99
TC-W370	119.99
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TC-5	219.99
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TC-W370	119.99
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MHC-3600	619.99

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PV-704	484.99
PV-710	569.99
PV-720	629.99
PV-750	779.99
PV-760	869.99
PV-S770	974.99
PV-645	649.99
PV-19	529.99
PV-41	719.99
PV-14	579.99
PV-18	589.99
PV-22	624.99
PV-32	739.99
PV-42	799.99
PV-52	1019.99
PV-52	889.99
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AG-450	1139.99
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PV-4214	229.99
PV-4120	259.99
PV-4164	329.99
PV-4250	279.99
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PV-4260	289.99
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PV-S4280	569.99
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CLD-1090	349.99
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NEW/HS-U56	CALL
HS-U55	439.99
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COMPUTING

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everything it needs to know about your video decks, such as model, format and so on. Once you've configured the system, you have total software control of your VCRs.

A Toolkit session begins with creation of a log that contains the in and out points of your scenes. You view and mark these scenes by playing the camcorders from the mouse or the keyboard. Once the scenes have been entered, you assemble them in the order you want by copying them into an edit list. When that's done, you simply click a command to assemble your list and *voila!* The computer runs both machines and performs the edits. If you don't like your first cut, you can go back and trim shots or rearrange scenes to your heart's content.

What separates *Video Toolkit* from similar desktop video products is its accuracy. The program lets you compensate for the eccentricities of the source machine you're using. When I used a Canon L1 camcorder (which offers no time code) as a source deck, previews and edits were usually accurate to within two frames. When I used a Ricoh R-108H camcorder, which features RC time code, edits were frame-accurate nearly all the time.

This is exceptional performance for consumer equipment, but *Toolkit* isn't only for consumer gear. The program also handles pro synchronization methods, like longitudinal time code and vertical interval time code.

MEDIAMAKER

Mediamaker was one of the first Macintosh programs to control VCRs. Not so much editing software as an elaborate multimedia sequencer, *Mediamaker* by Macromedia integrates graphics, sound, animation and video into a single finished presentation.

Like *VideoShop* and *Premiere*, *Mediamaker* uses the timeline metaphor for building a production. You move icons of your multimedia elements into sequential order along this timeline. Elements can be culled from LANC-compatible video sources, digitized or CD audio, any number of graphic file formats, and animations that have been created in *Macromedia Director* (an outstanding program for this purpose). Once your scenes and elements have been placed in the appropriate order in the sequencer, you hit a "print to video" command and the computer edits your production.

Mediamaker's VCR control scheme works very much like that of *Video Tool-*

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kit. You configure the software to work with your specific video equipment, and connect the video gear to the modem and printer ports on the Mac. One advantage this software offers is that you can perform overlay tricks during editing. Overlay allows you to add titles and graphics on top of incoming video. *Mediamaker* supports a number of overlay cards, and a simple titling program called *Titlemaker* lets you create static or animated titles to place over your footage.

The only real caveat with *Mediamaker* is that version 1.0 (which I tested) is not accurate enough for critical editing. The in/out points have a tendency to slide as you get deeper into your production. There is a reminder to calibrate, or zero, the source and slave decks, but this sometimes exacerbates the problem. The new update, *Mediamaker 1.5* (\$695) solves these problems and is going to stores at presstime. The new version supports RC time code and the Sony VISCA computer/video protocol. However, *Mediamaker* is probably better thought of as a multimedia program with video capabilities, rather than a desktop video package with multimedia integration.

These programs are just an overview of what's going on in desktop video, circa 1992. Obviously, desktop video won't continue to be a Macintosh-only proposition. Gold Disk has just introduced a Windows-compatible version of its excellent *Video Director* editing program for the Amiga, and Microsoft has announced a *QuickTime*-like protocol for PCs called *Audio/Video Interleaf* that promises to bring digital video to many more computer users. The advent of *QuickTime*, however, and the refinements that are sure to follow mark a key turning point in the evolution of desktop video. What people actually do with this technology remains to be seen. But the tools—although in their infancy—are finally here. ■

CAMCORNER

continued from page 34

stage, I was able to record a no-fuss video inventory of my collection of stamps, coins and miniature spy cameras. The lens accurately focused on the variously sized objects I held in front of it.

With conventional lenses, you focus on the object by adjusting the macro focus (usually by tweaking the zoom buttons) or by moving the camcorder back and forth. Both procedures are possible, but both are awkward, especially without assistance. But inner-focus lenses do all the work for you.

But the convenience comes with a few drawbacks. In low light, when the lens aperture is wide open, the lens has more trouble deciding where and what to focus on—a problem shared with some conventional lens designs. Manual focusing is possible, but some designs are easier to work with than others. JVC's S-VHS-C GR-SX90 and Canon's 8mm UC1, for example, have tiny buttons that move the inner lens electronically. There's no barrel to turn.

Sony solved the problem on its TR81 and CCD-TR101, which let you focus manually as you would with a 35mm SLR, by rotating the lens barrel. But you don't have to turn it very far. When the lens is at maximum wide-angle, it only takes a quarter turn of the barrel to rack the lens on the TR81 all the way from its closest macro setting to infinity. However, you have no manual control of the zoom—you're stuck with the speeds available through the zoom motor.

Full-range, inner-focus lenses are fast and responsive, which is a plus. But their speed can be a drawback in the autofocus mode, when the slightest change in composition can cause the lens to refine the focus, throwing the image into a distracting blur for a split second.

For that reason, I've learned to toggle between the manual and autofocus modes on my TR81, relying more on the autofocus setting only in bright light, where as a contrast averaging system, it works the best. In other situations, the combination of a wide-angle setting and bright light almost turns the lens into a fixed-focus optic, allowing you to turn off the autofocus completely, and just point and shoot.

Full-focus optics have changed the way I look at camcorders. When I attend trade shows and conventions, I almost always carry a camera with me. Now, I've begun to take a camcorder as well. A year ago, I took an 8mm model with conventional optics to one show, and found out how awkward it was to use when I wanted to record video memos of the small details of new camcorders, VCRs and accessories. At the minimum focusing distance, I was too far away from the subject, while the macro mode called for a working distance that wasn't always possible.

These problems disappear with full-range optics and I, for one, am grateful. And so should be every parent or pet owner who has tried in vain to capture the spontaneous antics of kids and animals on tape, neither of which tend to stay in one place for long.

There's no doubt this wonderfully convenient feature is long overdue, and will continue to spread to other makes and models. ■

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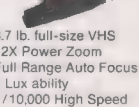
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DOWNHILL

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get until you ask. Call a day ahead.

● **Tell a tale.** Think about the end product and the audience long before you start shooting, advises Brian Sisselman, a producer/director/cameraman for Warren Miller Entertainment, perhaps the country's best-known ski filmmaker (see sidebar). Consider how long you want the video to be and what story you plan to tell. Sisselman suggests writing a script or storyboard in the form of a checklist or a collection of index cards on which each scene is described.

Once the preproduction work is done, you can use some of the tricks and tactics Sisselman has employed during 12 years of making ski films. According to Sisselman, the best ways to capture skiing's visual excitement are to change perspective regularly and limit scenes to six seconds. "Remember that in the new age of video and MTV, an audience is used to getting all the information it needs in a second," he says. "Six seconds is more than enough time for them to get the whole story."

Whether you're capturing an establishing shot of the ski area's access road or familiarizing headshots of family members who will be starring in the video, you can keep things interesting by taping cutaways. "After showing the family members, you might want to cut to a shot of the inside of the lodge or a close-up of a ski binding," Sisselman recommends. "Then maybe you can go back to showing the family members putting on their skis. The cutaways keep your audience's attention by giving it something different to look at."

What most people will want to look at, of course, is the action that takes place on the slopes. That's where hotshots perform aerial acrobatics and novices bury themselves and every piece of equipment that's attached to them in the snow. First, though, you must get to that action. Guys like Sisselman are often ferried by helicopter right to the spot. But home videographers, even those who get assistance from the ski resort, will mostly have to move themselves around.

To do this, you'll probably need the same ski equipment everyone else is using, including poles. But you have other equipment to carry—at the very least a camcorder and a spare battery, and if you're serious about getting good video, a tripod or monopod and lens adapters that will help you zoom in closer or get wide-angle shots. You might even want to carry a second pair of gloves, either fingerless or thinner than

your regular ski gloves, to make operating your camcorder's controls easier.

Sisselman says the best way to carry gear is in a backpack. Backpacks can be rigged to carry folded tripods or monopods, and strapping your gear firmly to your back shouldn't affect your skiing. Unless you take a real tumble, you're unlikely to land on your back and damage the equipment or impale yourself on a tripod—but be wary of the possibility.

Owners of subcompact camcorders may be able to carry the tripod, sling the camcorder over a shoulder and stuff accessories inside pockets. Because condensation can form when a camcorder that has been out in the cold is suddenly warmed, it's not a good idea to tuck it under your parka. For the same reason, don't bring the camcorder into the lodge during breaks.

Once you've licked the transportation problem, you're ready to shoot. To capture the action of a ski race or shoot footage for skiing technique analysis, pick a spot near the bottom of the ski run where you can get a long, unobstructed view. Plant your camcorder on monopod or tripod and zoom in all the way. Wait for the skiers to get close enough to nearly fill your viewfinder, then try to maintain that perspective by zooming out as the skier closes in. A power zoom may work fine, particularly one with variable speeds. But if your camcorder allows it, zooming manually may provide more accurate tracking. In either case, allow your subject to ski out of the shot before you stop shooting.

But don't rely too heavily on that one shot. Remember Sisselman's suggestions about variety and perspective and keep in mind his six-second rule. Take both close-ups and wide-angle shots and don't forget the cutaways. You can also get variety by shooting from unusual locations. For example, place the camcorder on a glove on the snow and shoot straight up the slope.

Another popular and effective shot is capturing your subjects as they exit a chairlift. But why not add variety by shooting them getting on the lift after you've gotten on the chair in front of them. A little patience and a lot of timing and communication might also yield an overhead shot from the chairlift with your subjects skiing below you.

Try shooting on slopes that aren't too crowded and are a little less difficult than those your subjects might regularly ski. Your subjects will look their best, and you won't have to worry about strangers skiing through a shot.

Videotaping on kinder, gentler terrain has another advantage—it lets you get out on the snow with your subjects. Some of my favorite shots are the ones in which I skied with the camcorder

running. That includes the time I was videotaping while skiing backwards and slid off the edge of the trail into a shallow culvert. My surprised yelp and the onscreen tumble are funny stuff—especially since the camcorder and my bones were unharmed by the fall.

Such falls are avoidable if you learn to shoot without gluing your eyeball to the viewfinder. You'll be surprised how easy it is to ski while videotaping if you simply hold the camcorder away from your face. Use a wide angle to maximize your field of focus, keep your subject in the frame and minimize camera jiggle.

You really don't need a special camcorder to shoot ski video. Of course, a compact model is generally better than a full-size one because it's easier to transport and use while skiing. Weatherproof camcorders have obvious advantages, as do those with extra-long optical or digital zoom capabilities. Wide-angle capability is also important for depth of field and to minimize the shakes. Camcorders with image stabilization can be a real boon for obvious reasons. And a high-speed shutter is a must if you want to analyze your technique—without it, your still frames will be blurry.

But just about any equipment used for videotaping any other activity can be used to produce good ski videos. The real key to great skiing video is you, the person using the equipment—and the amount of planning, practice and preparation you put into the project. ■

SHOOTING STAR

continued from page 51

that graces nearly every Miller video: the hilarious scene in which hapless weekend warriors struggle to stay upright while getting off a chairlift. Miller usually shoots that scene at California's Snow Valley, where, he says, "people who have never been to a ski area before come up from Beverly Hills and Burbank in their shorts and T-shirts to go skiing. It's a script written in heaven."

One of the things Miller sees all the time is people doing strange things with video cameras. He says, "I'm constantly amazed when I see people taking some of the shots they're going to have to sit and watch their whole lives—things like Uncle Clem taking 10 minutes to put on his ski boots. There are just three things that people need to do to take better videos: Shoot less, plan more and don't pan static shots." —SW

Fledgling ski videographers in need of advice on specific shooting problems can write Brian Sisselman at Warren Miller Entertainment, 505 Pier Avenue, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254.

32-INCH TV

continued from page 13

(PIP) system and memory allows two sizes of PIP insets, variable inset placement, swap and all the usual PIP features plus sequence replay (which plays back the last two seconds of video in the inset). A digital memory can capture frames showing recipes or phone numbers, and eight- or 16-picture channel indexes provide a series of tiny still pictures to show you what's on each channel. Unfortunately, there's no second tuner—you'll have to connect a video source to take advantage of some PIP functions.

There is also a remarkably user-friendly menu system in English, French and Spanish. The Program Palette option offers picture and sound presets for movies, sports, news, music and games, in addition to the usual video and audio adjustments. These presets change picture, hue, color, brightness, sharpness and color temperature settings. We found them reasonable for the suggested program material, and the adjustment ranges for the manual controls are wide enough to please the most finicky viewer. The menu system also accesses a sleep timer, channel block, time display with a daylight-saving time option, channel captioning, scan programming, favorite channel selection and many other options.

The handsome charcoal gray set has clean lines, with only a few front controls. These include buttons for demo, source selection and power, and rockers for volume and channel. A compartment at left contains video/stereo audio jacks that duplicate and have precedence over the video 3 input on the rear panel. There is no connector for S-video. The speakers add just eight inches to overall width.

The rear panel carries spring-loaded clips for front and rear speakers, three columns of S-video/video/stereo audio input jacks, video/stereo audio jacks for loop-through output of the video 3 input, and S-video/video/stereo audio monitor output jacks, which output the same signal being displayed onscreen. There are also fixed- and variable-level stereo audio outputs above mini jacks for Control S in and out. In the last column on the right are RF connectors for VHF/UHF/cable input, plus an auxiliary input and a loop-through output for use with a cable box.

The remote controls up to three VCRs, a laserdisc player and a cable box. It uses programmed code sets to accommodate many different brands of video products, so it's very easy to set

up. It also has a learn function, so it can control brands and models for which codes are not provided.

Two buttons control the menu system. The first, labeled menu, gets you into the system. The second is a rocker that doubles as a push-button switch—just use the rocker to select the parameter you want to adjust, then push it down to enter that parameter. The rocker then serves as a plus/minus adjustment control.

A covered compartment contains a slide switch for VTR 1/2/3/MDP, VCR transport controls, plus and minus buttons for picture adjustment, and buttons to activate the advanced PIP functions.

The primary operating control is the remote, but using the set is a lot easier than the remote's many buttons suggest. For regular TV viewing, there is no need to open the compartment. You even have basic controls for PIP, jump (last channel), digital memo, memo display and the sleep timer. Our mild objection to the menu design is that audio controls are distributed between three submenus rather than grouped together. Ease of use is excellent.

The excellent picture is white balanced for a measured color temperature of 7,750 Kelvins with Trinitone (color temperature) set low, and 9,350 Kelvins with Trinitone high. Accuracy of colors is also excellent.

The audio system is the best we've tested in a direct-view monitor. The adjustment range is quite wide. Both Dolby Surround and SRS sound good for movies, with our nod going to the Dolby. We wish Sony had provided for a subwoofer.

We compared the XBR² with Panasonic's 31-inch SuperFlat, which also has a reduced-curvature screen, and with the XBR Pro we use as a reference. Our impression was that the XBR² and the SuperFlat looked surprisingly similar. In fact, two sets of the same brand sometimes look less alike. Neither set matches the XBR Pro's color accuracy—like all professional monitors, its color temperature is set much lower than that of consumer monitors—but the XBR² and the SuperFlat produce a more detailed picture.

While the XBR² is more expensive than the SuperFlat, it offers advantages. The focus in the corners of the XBR² picture looks sharper, its luminance/chrominance separator performs better (so it will produce fewer hanging dots and dot crawl when fed by a VHS VCR or a laserdisc player with no S-video output), and while the SuperFlat sound system is good, the Sony sound system sets a new standard of performance for direct-view monitors. ■

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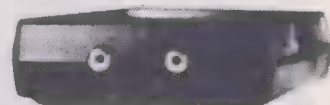
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GAZETTE

Video Flashes

IF YOU'VE BEEN looking for the RCA and ProScan 16:9 TV sets expected in stores in December, you'll have to wait a bit longer. Top Thomson Consumer Electronics executives say that limited regional test marketing of the widescreen sets is only now beginning, and the national rollout will not happen until spring or early summer. Meanwhile, Panasonic says it will begin selling its first 16:9 TV set, a 50-inch CinemaVision projection model, in April with a price tag of \$4,999.

ANIMATION FANS GOT A BIG surprise at the end of October when they popped their brand-new *Beauty and the Beast* cassettes into their VCRs: a trailer at the head of the tape announcing the March 26 re-release of Disney's beloved *Pinocchio*. The film was released on cassette in 1985 and quickly pulled from distribution. It has since become one of home video's most prized collector's items—sometimes fetching as much as \$300 for a mint copy. Disney managed to keep the \$24.99 reissue a secret before *Beauty's* release. Image Entertainment will release a CLV laserdisc edition on the same day for \$29.99.

A TRAILER ACCIDENTALLY placed at the start of one of Turner Home Entertainment's recent releases also packed a big surprise for a number of disgruntled viewers. Cassettes of *Christmas in Connecticut*, the ultra-

continued from page 9

houses joined by ■ breezeway), so Gwen (Goldie Hawn), a world-class seamstress at embroidering the truth, moves in. "Fibbing" that she is Newton's wife, Gwen and Newton hatch a plan to show Becky just how "marriage-able" he is.

In one scene, Newton and Becky rediscover romantic feelings for each other, and maneuver into the fireplace for an unusual close encounter. But, in what Delany calls "the only reshoot in the whole movie," the fireplace scene was recreated on ■ soundstage with ■ new ending—a faceful of soot for Becky. Frank Oz, the film's director, and Martin "thought the scene needed a button," Delany says. "I got covered with soot three times and had to shower between each take. It was in every crevice of my body." But, her efforts aside, the scene

G-rated directorial debut of "family values" Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger, began with a promotion for Turner's new *Casanova* release, complete with a nude scene. Turner has offered to replace all 25,000 copies.

IN AN ERA WITH TV SHOWS for every imaginable taste, there's finally a TV show about TVs—and about every other type of electronics product you can name. It's called *Sights & Sounds*, and it covers everything from camcorders and microscopes to virtual reality. The premier show concentrates on home theater, with a behind-the-scenes tour of Dolby Labs, a visit to LucasArts' Skywalker Ranch sound studios and discussions with several home theater experts. Watch for *Sights & Sounds* Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. EST on CNBC.

SAMSUNG WILL SOON MAKE life easier for compact camcorder buffs with a VHS hi-fi/8mm dual-deck VCR. Priced at \$999, it makes dubs from 8mm to VHS, and vice versa. This deck should finally make copying 8mm tapes easy enough for anyone to perform. Watch for it in July.

ARE YOU READY FOR RAP DE Bingo? A new CD + Graphics disc, available now only in Japan, lets bingo addicts boogie the night away without a human number-caller. When played on a machine with a shuffle-play function and displayed on a TV set, the disc delivers random combinations of letters and numbers. Japanese rap music introduces the game, and the kit includes plenty of bingo cards.

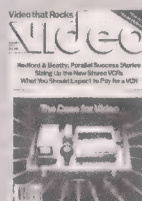
was cut from the final version. At the test screening, Martin told us, "it got a laugh, and both Frank and I and everyone said, 'It got a laugh, but it's too stupid. It's too predictable.' So it came out. It's just a judgment call."

In figuring out "what if" and making judgment calls, Martin credits intuition: "There can never be a comedy instruction book. There probably never has been...this is just too mercurial." And the art of comedy is something he still strives to perfect in his acting career. "Once you finally learn something, at least in my case, you want to quit. It's like stand-up: I did that," he says. "But this is endless. This is about the human spirit and human characters, and it has this endless future. You can do it as long as you can do it, and it's continually interesting." —April P. Bernard

TIMESHIFT

TEN YEARS AGO IN VIDEO MAGAZINE

We start 1983 with about 400 CED videodisc titles and roughly 350 laser-vision titles in stores. RCA predicts 700 CEDs by the end of the year, and LV shouldn't be far behind...**Do we really need 8mm video?** With few exceptions, everyone who's "into video" today is either using Beta or VHS. So why not continue to use the two formats as long as possible, maintaining a standardized link to what has been sold in the past? The new format could lose a lot of money if an increasingly consumer-conscious public gets tired of seeing "new and improved" labels on stuff every six months...**The Soviets** are dealing with something they consider insidious—the mysterious appearance of VCRs within the U.S.S.R. Soviet officials are concerned about the porn tapes Russkies have smuggled in, and movies like *Dr. Zhivago* which are considered subversive. Several dozen VCR owners have been arrested and some imprisoned...**Television** has not seen a technical breakthrough in close to 30 years; color was the last major innovation. But we may now be on the brink of two important developments: high-resolution monitors and digital television...**New videocassette releases** this month include *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, *My Dinner With Andre* and *The Compleat Beatles*...**Video censorship** has come up in a Connecticut mental hospital: MTV has been banned from the Private Institute for Living. According to a spokesman, "scenes of people regurgitating and decapitations are detrimental to the patients"...**RCA says** about one out of every six CED owners has purchased a videodisc of Cecil B. DeMille's *The Ten Commandments*...**Ted Turner** is launching a "fourth network" designed for family viewing. Says one insider: Turner's favorite programs are shows like *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*, and he's commissioned Hollywood to write '80s updates.



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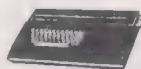
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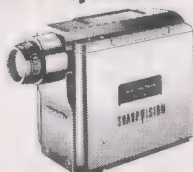
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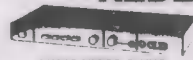
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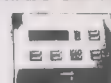
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OFF THE AIR

Clinton's high-tech take on video's future

BY FRANK BEACHAM

As Governor Clinton becomes President Clinton and Republican control of the federal bureaucracy passes into Democratic hands, we wondered how the new administration will treat the new technologies—from HDTV to the video dial tone—that are promising to dramatically change our viewing habits. Will Clinton and Gore sit tight on the policies that affect these sciences or aggressively change them? Will they alter the ground rules governing high-tech R&D? Will they favor one technology over another?

With the inauguration still to come, no one yet knows what specific technology policies to expect from the Clinton

administration. However, a briefing for *Video Magazine* by a senior Clinton/Gore technology adviser and a look at statements made during the campaign suggest that the administration will take an activist stance toward improving video technologies. In particular, we can look forward to:

- A strong effort to build a national information highway.
- An assault on policies that restrict the development of new telecommunications media.
- The emergence of Vice President Gore as the administration's high-tech point man.

Clinton's technology policy, released before the election, is revealing and specific. The document supports the creation of "a door-to-

door information network to link every home, business, lab, classroom and library by the year 2015." It proposes to "put public records, databases, library and educational materials on line for public use to expand access to information."

Such a network may well prove to be similar to that authorized by the High Performance Computing Act, which was sponsored by Gore as a senator and signed into law by President Bush in the closing days of 1992. The legislation authorizes \$2.9 billion for the development of a national, high-speed computer network and increased funding for computing R&D. The digital network, expected to be completed by

1996, will have enough capacity to permit two-way video communications. Gore, said the adviser, hopes it will demonstrate to Americans the benefits of a powerful fiber-optic highway designed to service homes, schools and businesses.

Though it's not stated, a fiber-optic network of this type could also carry HDTV programming, which raises one of the more immediate issues the administration will face—the selection later this year of a U.S. HDTV transmission standard. In our briefing, it was suggested the new administration would not interfere with the HDTV process. "The one thing you can be sure of is that Clinton and Gore are eager to move forward and want to get that technology out there," said the adviser. "There is no reason to stop the process."

But he added that we can expect the administration to attack policies that limit the development of new media. "We've got to change some of the telecommunications policies that date from the days when we had copper wire and voice and that was it." The adviser cited the cable industry in particular as an area where competition needs to be increased. "We're talking about getting rid of some regulatory barriers and unleashing the private sector. We want to protect the consumer, but in a way that gives companies clear rules and a stable environment."

Leading the charge will be Vice President Gore who, Clinton announced during the campaign, would be given "the responsibility and authority to coordinate the administration's vision for technology." Described as "the techie on the ticket," Gore made digital technology issues a specialty during his years as a senator. At home, he has three personal computers and regularly uses electronic mail to communicate with staff members.

If all goes as expected, and Gore becomes the Clinton administration's technology chief, supporters of HDTV and other advanced video technologies will have little to fear and, perhaps, much to celebrate.



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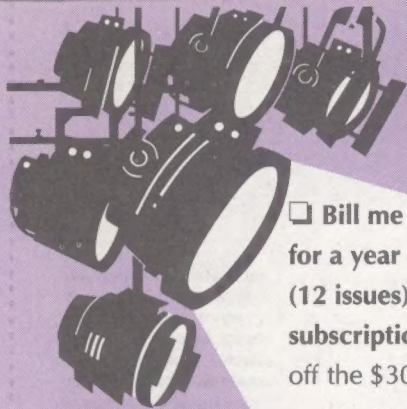
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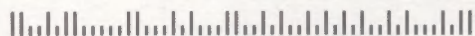
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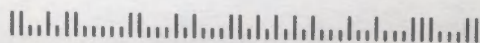
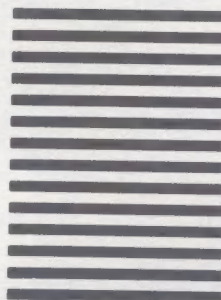
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